MODERN PAINTINGS DESCRIBED BY GREAT WRITERS

SCHOOLS

THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
SCHOOLS

Modern Paintings

BOOKS BY MISS SINGLETON

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DUTCH NEW YORK. Manners and Customs of New Amsterdam in the Seventeenth Century.
A GUIDE TO THE OPERA.
A GUIDE TO MODERN OPERA.
HOW TO VISIT THE GREAT PICTURE GALLERIES.

From a Carbon Print by Braun & Co., of Paris and New York

Portrait of Whistler Boldini

Art
Painting.
S

Modern Paintings

As Seen and Described
By Great Writers

COLLECTED AND EDITED BY
ESTHER SINGLETON

With Numerous Illustrations

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Preface

To present in a book of this size a gallery of modern paintings that would be entirely satisfactory is manifestly impossible, for it is needless to remind the reader that painting in the Nineteenth Century has undergone so many phases and developments that it would be out of the question even to include a specimen of every important school, much less to represent every famous master.

When we survey French Art, for example, from the days of Gros and David to those of Manet, Monet and Degas, or American Art from the days of Copley, West and Stuart to those of Abbey, Whistler and Sargent, the field is indeed crowded with figures.

It would be interesting to wander into Russia, Austria, Hungary, Scandinavia, Italy and Spain and exhibit what the artists of the Nineteenth Century have done and what of their work is individual and what has been inspired by the Spirit of the Age.

Space, however, insists that we hang here only some of the most striking and famous pictures of the century that has just drawn to a close, and represent only painters who have enjoyed the greatest vogue, who have been founders of schools, or who are ever growing in popular estimation, like Alfred Stevens, for example.

Hence, we have here Leys, founder of archaic realism, and his pupil, Alma-Tadema; the Romantic Delacroix; Gérôme and Meissonier, famed for their exquisite detail; Fromentin, the discoverer of Algeria as a painter's haunt; Rosa Bonheur, entirely unmoved by the modern spirit; members of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood; and such nature-lovers as Millet, Courbet, Corot, Daubigny, Rousseau, Dupré and the rest of the Barbizon group with the Italian Segantini, the German Liebermann, the Dutch Mauve and Israels and the American Inness whom they so greatly influenced.

Standing quite alone is that peculiar genius, Boecklin, of whom Richard Muther says:

"If it be asked who created on the continent of Europe the most fervid religious paintings of the Nineteenth Century; who alone exhausted the entire scale of sensations from the placidity of repose to the sublimity of heroism, from the gayest laughter to tragedy; who possessed the most solemn and serious language of form, and, at the same time, the greatest poetry of colour—the name of Boecklin will probably form the answer."

Another picture that stands in isolation is Munkaczy's *Christ before Pilate,* which many will remember was exhibited in this country in a sensational manner about twenty-five years ago.

In my selection, however, I have tried to emphasize those Masters who exhibit the dawn and growth of the modern spirit, those who present broad effects rather than minute

details and those who are poetic dreamers and lovers of luminous and aërial effects. It is, therefore, fitting that the circle begins with Turner, "the father of modern Impressionism" and ends with that master of hot, quivering light—Sorolla.

To this modern group we must add the portrait painter Boldini, who could not be better represented than by his distinguished portrait of Whistler. Of him, the critic already quoted has aptly remarked:

"From his pictures posterity will learn as much about the sensuous life of the Nineteenth Century as Greuze has told us about that of the Eighteenth."

The literary criticisms and essays in some cases exclusively deal more with the painter's general characteristics than with one work.

I wish here to express my thanks to Mr. William A. Coffin and the Century Company for permission to use a portion of the appreciation of Cazin which appeared in the *Century Magazine* in 1898; and to the editors of the *Outlook* for permission to reprint portions of Mr. John C. Van Dyke's *George Inness* and Mr. Cadwallader Washburn's *Sorolla.*

E. S.

New York, October, 1911.

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APPROACH TO VENICE

(J. W. M. Turner)

ROBERT DE LA SIZERANNE

HE who made his way into the Turner Gallery at the Guildhall Exhibition in 1899, or has ever visited one of the rare and mysterious collections where Turner is visible on the Continent, has come out with a vision of terrestrial things revived to such an extent as to have made him feel as though he had for an hour been treading some unknown planet.

A sea strewn with archipelagoes of precious stones, palatial amphitheatres rising from the waters, retaining still the shimmer of the corals and the pearls whence they have emerged, broad perrons washed unceasingly by waves which roll against the thresholds of palaces, fawning like tame panthers—a vast Venice, whose canals are oceans, whose parts are islands floating in clear and moving waters—such is Turner's world.

And when it occurs to him one day to paint a railway (see his *Steam, Rain and Speed*) his very railroad passes over the waters, through a water spout, amidst such a conflagration that one would think it to be an illustration of the Creation, or that day when the Waters of the Heaven were divided from the Waters of the Earth. An infinity of surprises is often within the borders of one great frame: long flights of steps, descending from lofty

terraces, circling around like birds about to alight, and which, having reached the sea, tarry not but plunge beneath the waters, leading to one knows not what watery empire, to what other submarine palaces; and trees springing up, like jets of water, green, red and orange, to the skies; gondolas crowding close to palaces in groups like little timorous children, or else apart, their gold or purple horns doubled by the reflection; whole rows of palaces with the innumerable lines of their ruined columns stretching in long alignment; whole rows of ships and *caravelles,* their shadows mingling and contesting in the waters—a multitude of things, massive and sumptuous, which hang and steep in thick and multi-coloured medley. How one can picture the hordes of Barbarians and Turks and Algerians thronging these holds, or lurking under the drapery, or sails, or rigging! And the hidden arms, the stolen treasure, and fruits juicy and o'er-ripe! What a jumble of floating oranges, and half-open pomegranates; what a mass of vegetable refuse in these Venetian waters at the approaches to the morning market-places—and at the same time what pieces of jewellery, what cunning pyrotechnic display, what cultivated flower-patch on the Riviera could equal the effect that Turner has made of all this? Has anything so rich to the eye ever left the jeweller's hand? The gold-dusted green of the imperial beetle, the yellowish-green of the cypress, the blue of the Brazilian butterfly, the deep sapphire of the beetle, the emerald of the sacred scarabæus, the splendours of the *cicindela*—all may be seen in these blots

Approach to Venice — Turner

and slabs of colour, heavy and mysterious like ancient stained-glass.

What was Turner's method of observation? Continuous? No, but intense and continually reminiscent. One knows his life—that of a recluse, full of monotony, buried within the darkest house in the dingiest part of London, varied by rare flights to the English seaports or to the land of Sun. As for his surroundings, we know what they were, too, for his biographers have described for us, too often perhaps, the sordid house whence never a green leaf was to be seen, nor often the sky itself—a house so desolate that one might have thought some great crime had been committed therein; a house at which the very tax-collector might have ceased to call. "Some one," remarked the policeman, "is supposed to live there." And "some one" did live there in fact; some one endowed with a visual memory so vast, and with a reactive force so great, that he transformed this foggy, smoky place into one of radiant horizons, thrusting back the walls around him so far into space and time that neither the East nor the ages past ever equalled in splendour the luminous projections of his seething brain. And not only was this seclusion the reverse of injurious to his imagings; it was even indispensable to them. The art criticism of to-day holds it as an element, and almost as a condition, of success that the artist should live in the midst of the surroundings he describes or paints. Now this opinion, banal as it is—so banal as to have penetrated as far as the theses laid down at the Sorbonne—is neverthe-

less radically false. The history of art flatly gives it the lie. None assuredly painted the splendour of the Continent as did this *insulaire,* nor the movement of the seas like this recluse. He was forever thinking of these things—and although he did not know them *physically,* his spirit was never absent therefrom. Here we touch on one of the profoundest traits in the British character. The English are a race for whom the Continent is a sort of Promised Land, the home of the Ideal, a Canaan with its gigantic grapes, something akin to what in art and poetry China was for a long time to Japan, that other satellite-isle gravitating around that other Continent. The English do not tell you this—in perfect good faith they believe the contrary. But their art, their works, betray their secret thoughts by showing where their imagination lies—Italy, the shores of Provence, Spain, the mountains of Switzerland and the Tyrol, the lands of the olive, the orange and the grape. All that England does not possess haunts the Englishman's spirit. For him the ideal is there—and especially in the sunshine, in the twilight, in those violent, burning tones which never show themselves on his isle save by accident, and then only by a superficial effect of light, not as local colour, properly belonging to the objects it reveals. Now that which is rare is precious. When Ruskin describes the paternal garden where his childhood was spent he uses a word which sounds strangely in the Southerner's ear. "Clustered pearl," he says, "and pendant ruby, joyfully discoverable under the large leaves *that looked like Vine.*"

The Vine! Here is a splendid far-away symbol, promise of a nature and a civilisation, gay, smiling and perfumed. Thus the promise of the ancient world is contained entire in the little wild olive tree sprouting with difficulty beneath a rock on the hill-side of the Rhone, a hundred kilometres above Provence. The men who will attach so much sentiment to so slight a thing are not those who will let go aught of the impressions they take in presence of the land of their dreams. They will translate them on the spot, wholly and entirely. On reaching Venice the English artist—especially at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century—coming from so far and for so short a time, has but one idea, which is to carry away all Venice in his eyes and in his heart. Compare him for a moment with his Italian *confrère.* The Venetian quits his *calle,* strolls along, looks, admires; but he will find it all there on the morrow, the Giudecca in the same place, the same domes curving against the sky, the same gondolas on the canal, and the same waters repeating the forms and the hues of the same palaces in the lisping of their reflections. He is in no hurry to reproduce all this; he simply enjoys it. He lets his fancy rock idly on these waters which will never dry up, lets it ripen in this sunlight which shall never be put out. His love, as it were, is too sure to be keenly felt—and he turns away to eat an ice at Florian's this afternoon which will have no end! Then he goes home, . . . having done nothing. The Englishman, for his part, knows well the afternoon must end, knows that soon he must be back again in the yellow fog,

in the dense, cold atmosphere. So he inhales, devours, absorbs through all the *papillae* of his imagination. He wants this sun; he grips this vision. His strength springs from his desire, his faculties increased tenfold by his despair. His genius is born of his love. Thus art does not spring necessarily from the *milieu* wherein the creator *lives*. Most of the great landscapists of the century—Corot, Rousseau, Turner—were born in big towns, children of home-staying folk, dwelling in gloomy little shops.

Withal Turner is English—English in his subjects, English in his passion for Nature, English in his colour. His foremost subject is the sea, not the mere grey or blue line of the horizon setting off a landscape, or some unused lagoon, wherein are generated and multiply the puny lives of an inferior animal existence; 'tis the open redoutable, ever-varying sea, at times under control although in motion, occasionally narrowed in the confines of a port, but with an outlet on the infinite. He has gone in quest of the moments when the water is itself, when it possesses a physiognomy, is not a simple track cloven by ships, or a mirror into which one gazes; but when it is at one and the same time an obstacle and a help, akin to an uncertain character, and quivering with a passion that is unstable and restless, yet proper to it. It is, moreover, the great highway by which England communicates with the world's immensity, and through which the British Empire is in touch with its colonies. This passion for the Ocean conceals seemingly the vague desire of realising the poet's aspiration:

" Faire une ceinture au monde
Du sillon de notre vaisseau."

Again Turner is English in his passion for colour. This passion is made manifest in all English works from the Eighteenth Century to the present day, when placed in juxtaposition with the contemporaneous paintings of other countries. Such has been the goal of English endeavour, of English criticism. When Ruskin chides some Continental painter, it is ever because of his lack of colour. The English were alone capable, in their strange colour-appetite, of discovering that the ancients, that Titian and the rest, orginally made a glaring and crude use of colour and that the softness and soberness nowadays so admired are due to the unforeseen action of two great masters to whom one always forgets to give credit—" Time and varnish." * It is among Englishmen that Delacroix, to be followed by Monet and Pissaro, went to seek their ideas for the renovation of continental art by colour, or, to be exact, their colour-technique.

Turner was the first of the Impressionists, and after a lapse of eighty years he remains the greatest, at least in the styles he has treated. That Impressionism came from England is proved by the letters of Delacroix and demonstrated by M. Paul Signac in his pamphlet on Neo-Impressionism. It is a fact which the reader of Ruskin, and especially of his *Elements of Drawing,* written in 1856, must be cognisant

* Sir John Everett Millais.

of. Turner is the father of the Impressionists. Their discoveries are his. He first saw that Nature is composed in a like degree of colours and of lines, and in his evolution, the rigid and settled lines of his early method gradually melt away and vanish in the colours. He sought to paint the atmosphere, the envelopment of coloured objects seen at a distance, rather than the things enveloped; and he quickly realised that the atmosphere could not be expressed, except through the infinite parcelling out of the things which Claude Lorrain drew in a solid grouping and painted *en bloc*. He shredded the clouds. He took the massive and admirable masses, the *cumuli* of Ruysdael, of Hobbema, of Van de Velde, picked the threads out of them and converted them into a myriad-shaded charpie, which he entrusted to the winds of heaven. Between the glint of the sun and the mirror-like reflections of the waves, palaces lost their shape, to preserve only, as in the case of gems, their brilliant sheen. Henceforth, ships possessed a motion common to all, a, so to speak, "dorsal" one. Colour triumphed over line disrupted in every direction. Turner's next discovery was that shade is a colour like the rest, and that it is not necessary to represent it by a sombre rendering of the tone. He was led to this when contemplating sea effects, where light bursts forth, without, however, any great opposition on the part of shade. There is very little shade on water, or, if preferred, there is so much of it, and so little of it, that it is impossible to come to any definite determination of it as exemplified in the black *repoussoirs* occupy-

ing the foreground in all old landscapes. Gradually did Turner wipe these sets-off from his canvases. Perceiving that Nature could produce light, without having recourse to sombre contrasts, he, imitating her, sought to dispense with them. He evolved from the luminous effect by contrast, that is to say, from opposing black to white, to the effect by *duplication, i. e.,* by coloured opposings. Of each shade he made a quick colour.

That is not all. This very colour he brought out more strongly by contrast and made it more alive than any one before him had ever done. With this object in view, he conceived the idea of laying it on in its entire purity, by imperceptible dots or lines, dividing the same tone into an infinity of diversifications juxtaposed with such skill that, however glaring they may be when viewed at close range, they blend in perfect harmony on being looked at from a certain distance. 'Tis the *division of colour* and the *optical blending.*

Here we have not only prophesied, but applied the three great discoveries of Impressionism:—Nature, rather colours than lines; shades, themselves colours; colour expressed by the division of tone. Thus does Turner, emanating from Claude, become the founder of Impressionism. But he absorbs everything: his predecessors and his successors. He dispenses one from looking at Claude Lorrain and Claude Monet.

On the point of closing these lines, I find I have not spoken of any painting of Turner's. It is because I have

spoken of them all, and that in the case of a genius like his, it is impossible to make a faithful and minute transcription, no more than he himself made from Nature, one may merely attempt to give an impression. Nevertheless, if one is to select a work as being central and typical of his life, one combining the most accurate observation and the most intense creative power, I would say—go and see the *Approach to Venice,* with its sea and sky of infinite depth, its background of pale-green light, shining betwixt the two like a floral star, sown with blood-hued spots, its crystalline kiss given in the bosom of the delicate haze to the slumbering waters, by the lips of sunset, its gondolas gliding between pellucid waters with their red cabins and their golden ornaments, from Fusina towards Venice, between the phantoms of the Giudecca. All the benefactions heaped on humanity by Turner are there to be found. To approach Venice is to approach the city without streets, without vehicles, noises; the city of museums, resplendent with Carpaccio's and Tintoretto's masterpieces, of churches brilliant with metallic splendour, of sanctuaries panelled with gold and lit up with mysterious lamps and of palaces suspended from stone lacework. But nothing will be found more beautiful than the *Approach* itself. No robe from Tintoretto's brush will be found to possess the splendour of the gondolas conveying us. No Titian—that of the Mountains of Cadore, the presence of which we divine, no nimbus about the head of a saint will equal that sun, no purple these skies, no prayer the infinite sweetness of the dream experienced dur-

ing those brief delicious moments. Nothing will be found to compare with the distant vision of that city which, on the horizon, seems to be too beautiful ever to be reached, and appears to recede from the traveller's barque.

"*Ainsi que Dèle sur la mer,*" gilded like youth, silent as dreams, and like happiness unattainable.

SIEGE OF CONSTANTINOPLE BY THE CRUSADERS *

(*Eugène Delacroix*)

CLAUDE PHILLIPS

DELACROIX'S whole career from his *début* in 1822 with the *Dante et Virgile* to his apotheosis, while he was yet among the living, at the International Exhibition of 1855, had been one of storm and combat. No man was ever more passionately worshipped on the one hand, or more ruthlessly, more absolutely condemned on the other. Thenceforward, down to his death in 1863, and for some years afterwards, his fame stood at its highest point, and the scoffers, though they might not be convinced, were at any rate silent.

It is to the rise of Naturalism—that offspring of Romanticism which ended by devouring its parent—that the

* Baldwin, Count of Flanders, and the Doge Dandolo come to take possession of the town which the soldiers are pillaging. In the foreground a knight on horseback, followed by his escort, advances on a terrace; groups of inhabitants have rushed forward to meet him and fall on their knees imploring his protection; on the right, a young girl, half-naked, her blonde hair falling around her, weeps beside her dead mother; on the left an old man, surrounded by his family, extends his arms beseechingly towards the knight, while a soldier is thrusting a richly-dressed Greek from his house. In the distance the town is seen in flames and also the blue waves of the Bosphorus; on the horizon, the coast of Asia.

The Siege of Constantinople by the Crusaders Delacroix

gradual decline, if not exactly of Delacroix's reputation, yet certainly of his popularity, may be traced. Now that the din of battle between the modified Raphaelesque Classicism of Ingres and the passionate, imaginative Romanticism of Delacroix has so long died out, critics of authority, in and outside France, are practically unanimous in acknowledging that the chief of the Romantics was and must remain a great figure in the art of the Nineteenth Century. They differ in their estimate of his technical accomplishment, and of the quality of his genius, but in this only.

It is more than the mere clangour of combat, the flow of blood, the sound of lamentation, the ruthless overthrow of the weaker by the stronger, that are brought before us by his pictures, though these are his chief and most obvious themes. It is in reality, all the restlessness, the storm, the change of the modern period following upon the Revolution, and set loose after the downfall of the Empire that the master makes us feel. It is the reflection, in the shifting colours and with the transforming power of art, of the ever-restless, the deeply wounded spirit of the poet-painter, at war with the world as he found it, and aggressively disdainful of its outer aspects and inner conditions.

Yet another disadvantage weighs against Delacroix. He selected most of his subjects, when they were not of a purely decorative character, from the great poets of former times, or the romantic literature of his own—from Dante, Shakespeare, Ariosto, Tasso, Goethe, Byron, Walter Scott; and he had thus against him from the beginning all those—

and they must inevitably have been the majority—who came to him with preconceived notions, who had already conjured up their own visions of the scenes which the poet of the brush boldly undertook to paraphrase rather than to reproduce.

And yet the French master was not a painter of literary temperament, like our own pre-Raphaelites of the second generation, or like Mr. Watts in his later development. He was an artist who took inspiration and sustenance from literature, but saw his subjects, however imperfectly at times, with the true vision of the painter, content only when they flashed before him complete in every essential part and willing to leave nothing to the laborious processes of conscious evolution and rearrangement. What he did in the majority of instances—we say this remembering the unstinted admiration expressed by Goethe for the lithographed illustrations to his *Faust*—was to recast the literary subjects chosen, to recreate them from the plastic standpoint in his own mould, so that to do them justice they must be judged by themselves, and without *arrière-pensée*.

For the reason now lightly touched upon the chief of the Romantic school may possibly never regain the now more than half-estranged love of the outer world. It is hardly probable either, that any Romanticist of these latter days, however enthusiastic may be his admiration, will be found to repeat those words of passionate yet not indiscriminate worship which fell from the lips and the pens of Théophile Gautier, Baudelaire, and the generation of those who were

young in 1830. Still, when the artistic history of the Nineteenth Century comes to be written, it will be found that of the Romanticists proper—leaving out the great school of landscape to which the description *Romantic* is sometimes, though not very appropriately applied—Delacroix, with his precursor and friend Géricault, and his contemporary, the Orientalist, Decamps, will tower high above the other painters of their school, most of whom have been submerged and overwhelmed by the mere fashions, the outer *défroque* of the movement they represent. Leaving out of consideration for the moment the technical defects and mannerisms of Delacroix, the chief characteristics of his art are its intense vitality, the absolute sincerity of its passionate agitation, the unconscious truth with which, while dealing with scenes far removed, not only by reason of their *mise-en-scène* but in their essence, from those of his own time, it reflects the clouds and storms of that time and its passionate repudiation of accumulated tradition.

Strangely enough, it was in the studio of Guérin, the most ultra-classic of the Classicists, that was prepared the great revolt from the frozen immobility to which the arbitrary principles of David in historic art had reduced his generation. Here Delacroix met Géricault (his elder by some seven years), besides Ary Scheffer, Sigalon and Champmartin.

Born in 1799, the young student was seventeen years old when he entered Guérin's studio. Left fatherless in 1805, and placed by his mother at the Lycée Louis-le-Grand, the

ardent youth had during his school days had opportunities of visiting the Louvre, and studying the unparalleled collection of masterpieces then accumulated in its halls. These filled him with unbounded admiration, and aroused a spirit of emulation which caused him to decide upon the adoption of painting as the career of his life.

The real beginning of Delacroix's serious career as an artist, the point of departure of his fiery course as the typical Romanticist, is the exhibition of the *Dante et Virgile* at the Salon of 1822. Every one knows Charles Blanc's pretty and true story, telling how the young artist of three-and-twenty, being too poor to afford an orthodox frame for his large canvas, had patched up what he hoped would be deemed a sufficient one out of four laths of common wood, gilt or painted yellow. When the Salon opened—it was then held in the Louvre—Delacroix, rushing through the galleries, and failing to find the canvas on which he had built such high hopes, was reduced to despair. At last, to his amazement, he discovered it in the Salon Carré, then as now the place of honour, in a handsome new frame. His own poor substitute had fallen to pieces, and Gros, enthusiastic in his admiration of the picture, though it answered to his former rather than to his actual style, had splendidly replaced it.

In some respects the artist rises higher in this work of his youth than he ever did again. Though drawing and modelling may in many respects be open to criticism, the picture is, what Gros recognised it to be, a masterpiece of

its kind. It is a question whether any painter has realised with a power so closely akin to that of the poet the lurid yet perfectly plastic and precise imaginings of Dante.

The painter's expedition to Morocco in 1832 had a paramount influence in developing his system as a colourist and *luminariste*. The Africa he saw and painted was not, it must be borne in mind, the commonplace tourist's resort of to-day, but a land which from the artist's standpoint was still to be discovered. Moorish Africa must still count, notwithstanding its western position, as an offshoot of the East, and it is thence that Delacroix brought back those pages instinct with oriental life and poetry, among which the most notable are *Femmes d'Alger* of 1834 (Louvre); the *Noce Juive dans le Maroc* of 1839 (Salon of 1841—now in the Louvre), and the brilliant *Muley Abd-el-Rhaman sortant de Son Palais* of 1845 (Museum of Toulouse).

The *Prise de Constantinople par les Croisés* (1841), which was brought from Versailles and placed in the Louvre, is the definite expression of Delacroix's art in its later phase. In it, intensely dramatic as are some isolated passages, the dramatic standpoint, which was supreme in the earlier works, is now, on the whole, subordinated to the decorative. It is beyond doubt the sumptuous art of Paolo Veronese that has suggested this vast splendid canvas, in which against a background of azure sky and water, of grey-white architecture such as Veronese loved, stands out the troop of mounted Crusaders, making its

way, still in battle-array, through scenes of prolonged struggle and massacre. The colour is a feast to the eye, and notwithstanding its family resemblance to the Venetian school, quite personal to Delacroix. But, perhaps because monumental splendour has been chiefly aimed at, the dramatic unity and intensity of expression which marked those early productions, the *Dante et Virgile* and the *Massacre de Scio,* are in some measure wanting.

THE CHILDREN OF EDWARD THE FOURTH

(*Paul Delaroche*)

LEONCE BENEDITE

PAUL DELAROCHE (or, to be more exact according to his civil name Hippolyte, called Paul) was born in Paris on July 6, 1797. He was the son of a very well-known expert in pictures and was brought up with all the advantages of the well-to-do middle class. His elder brother had also begun his career as a painter, and the father would not allow Paul to launch on his profession until his brother gave it up. He made his *début* with a landscape and tried for the special *grand prix* for historical landscape, in which he was beaten by Michallon. He then entered Gros's studio, where he applied himself to the study of the figure and where he came in contact with the principal artists—Carter, Bonington, Roqueplan, Bellanger, etc.,—who formed that Romantic group.

Delaroche exhibited for the first time in 1822. He received on that occasion the advice of Géricault and then fell under the influence of the young master, whose dawning fame began to send forth brilliant rays to guide with their effulgent clearness the new movement,—Eugène Delacroix. His first success dates from that famous year 1824, so glorious for Romanticism, with a *Jeanne d'Arc* and a *Vincent de Paul,* in which he already displayed in opposi-

tion to the beautiful follies of his master and the academic coldness of the partisans of the opposite group, those qualities of measure, order, and wisdom that made his reputation among that *haute bourgeoisie* which the *roi bourgeois* himself called the *"Juste-milieu."*

The happy medium was in reality the character of that art, so ingenious, learned and discreet, which does not travel too far into history or drama but selects the piquant episode, delighting in the intimacies of anecdote and avoiding the violence of conflicts and bloodshed; combining finally the drawing of Ingres with the colour of Delacroix, while emphasising the details and the picturesque.

He rapidly became celebrated from 1830, with the revolution which led the arrival of the *bourgeoisie;* he became its privileged painter. Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur in 1828, Delaroche was elected member of the Institute in 1832 and was made professor in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in 1833. He married in Rome, in 1835, the only daughter of Horace Vernet who died in 1843. Delaroche died on November 4, 1856.

Paul Delaroche produced a great number of works; historical subjects, religious subjects, and—principally at the end of his life—wall decorations; above all the great decoration of the Hemicycle in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, made famous by the engraving of Henriquel-Dupont. He also left some good portraits, such as those of Guizot, M. de Salvandy, M. de Rémusat, F. Delessert, Emile Péreire, Thiers, and M. de Pastoret. Following the taste of the

The Children of Edward the Fourth Delaroche

day, evoked by the novels of Walter Scott and by the political orientation of the French *bourgeoisie,* turned towards parliamentary England, Delaroche voluntarily chose his subjects from the history of that country. Sometimes it was the *Death of Elizabeth,* sometimes the little *King Edward V. and his brother, the Duke of York;* sometimes *Cromwell* opening the coffin of Charles I, and contemplating his defunct enemy; *Jane Grey; Stafford* led to the scaffold, etc. But the dark tragedies of these troublous periods did not inspire him with throbbing and passionate works such as Delacroix conceived; he made of them scenes of sentiment, from which horror is excluded and in which reason is always associated with emotion.

The *Death of Queen Elizabeth* exhibited in 1827, which belongs to the Louvre, is certainly not from the point of view of comprehension of the subject one of his best works; but it is one of those which brought him much success on account of the qualities that it revealed and also by the faults which were made to please the bad taste of the public. The drama which is occasioned by the death of the old queen, intelligent, but egotistical, unfeeling and wicked, greedy for power and unsatiable of life, is entirely lost in the avalanche of velvets, brocades, satins, embroideries, cushions and sumptuous costumes, in which the painter tried his budding virtuosity. But Delaroche was quickly brought to his senses and stopped on the dangerous slope of that facile dilettantism and returned to a manner that was more sober, more grave, more expressive and more in

accordance with his picturesque temperament and his moral nature.

The *Children of Edward,* exhibited in 1831, placed in the Luxembourg and then in the Louvre, thoroughly characterises this manner, which is really his true manner. Everybody knows the subject of this little drama, which his brush has rendered so touchingly and which was represented on the stage, two years afterwards in 1833, in a tragedy by Casimir Delavigne. Critics were pleased, moreover, to find analogies between the painter and the dramatic author. The two unhappy sons of Edward IV.—the young king Edward V., aged thirteen, and his brother the Duke of York, were imprisoned in the Tower of London, by the order of Richard Duke of Gloucester, who usurped the throne under the name of Richard III. Seated on the side of a bed with their arms around each other, in the terror of solitude and the presentiment of their sad fate, they lift their eyes from Holy Book from which they are drawing their pious consolations as they hear a heavy noise behind the door,—the footsteps of the assassins who are coming to cut their throats. This little dumb scene of an eloquence so simple in its sober action, the discreet selection of the accessories each one rendered with the requisite accent of realistic truth, the ingenious idea of the little dog that is running to the door and thus announces the coming of the dark messengers of the usurper,—all this remains in the public memory and assures an enduring popularity for its author.

FOUNDER OF THE ARCHAIC SCHOOL

(*Henri Leys*)

CHARLES BLANC

HENRI LEYS was born in Antwerp, Feb. 18th, 1815, just when that city had been taken away from France to be given to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. His father was a dealer in religious prints, and his master was a somewhat feeble genre painter, Ferdinand dc Braekeleer. About 1830, the Belgian School was directed by a few pseudo-classic professors who belonged to the following of David, and who believed they were teaching the true principles of that illustrious master without possessing any of his higher qualities. Cold, conventional and mannered drawing, pale and languid colour and sapless and lifeless painting were the characteristics of the Flemish School at the period in which Leys made his appearance. But it is only just to say that he was not the first to rejuvenate the art of his country. That honour belongs especially to Wappers, Gallait and De Keyser, who, however, were only moderate reformers whose audacity matched that of Paul Delaroche.

For a long while undecided and timid, restricted to little genre pictures, in which he did his best to revive Ostade, Metsu and Peter de Hooch, Leys lived for about ten years without coming to the front, or at least without making

himself known outside his own country; however, his pictures found purchasers even in France, and M. Delessert, in particular, had in his gallery three pieces by Leys, notably a *Lace Maker* and a *Spinner,* which recalled the old Dutch Masters, and which attracted no attention at the sale of that celebrated collection. Under his master, Ferdinand de Braekeleer, who was his brother-in-law, he had contracted the habit of certain yellow, clear and sweetish tones that made his pictures insipid till about 1846. But a day came when this debilitating concoction changed into a generous liquor, and when the painter, still young, wanted to raise himself from simple genre to historical genre. This was the time when he sent to the Louvre *salon* the *Fête Bourgeoise,* the *Armurier* and the *Partie de Musique,* which won for him a third class medal and the honour of being discussed in the Parisian newspapers. Thoré, among others, who wrote about him, observed that he had a fat and facile touch, variety of colour and transparent shadows; and he informed the public that the works of Leys which were highly prized in Belgium were often mistaken there for the paintings of Old Masters.

Nevertheless, it was not till the Universal Exposition of 1855 that Leys was known to the public, and that we, after having long lost sight of him, found him broadened and transformed by his labours and by explorations in the domains of the modern French school, toned (I do not say chilled) by time, serious, collected and strong. A new

sense was revealed in his work, the sense of history. Passing over Rubens, Van Dyck and Teniers, to reach the Flemings and Germans of the Sixteenth and even of the Fifteenth Century, he had saturated himself in the contemplation of the old imagery, manuscript illuminations, and native and foreign paintings. He had studied Van Eyck, Van der Weyden, Mabuse, Memling, Quentin Matsys, Lucas van Leyden, Holbein and Albrecht Dürer; and lastly Peasant Breughel, and Van Orley, whose pretty female figures were so delicate in complexion and fine in feature.

In the study of these masters, Henri Leys transformed himself. On one hand, he became so saturated with their spirit that he regarded himself as one of their race, and we may consider him not only as their fellow countryman and relative, but also as their contemporary. On the other hand, his drawings became more condensed, and he learned that harmony can be obtained with the most intense colourations. The *Promenade hors des murs,* the *Nouvel an en Flandre,* and the *Trentaines de Bertall de Haze* are the three pictures in which his new qualities showed themselves with a vigour that surprised everybody in the Universal Exposition of 1855. Those who took interest in and kept up with the doings in the world of art were struck with the metamorphosis that had occurred in the talent of a foreign artist who—by exception—was known to them.

On looking at these three works, one would have said that the painter had been born about the end of the Fifteenth

Century, and had flourished early in the Sixteenth. His intuition was so true that it resuscitated the old days; and he made them live again not by virtue of erudition and archaeological knowledge, but by creating them anew, so to speak, by restoring them as if the times which are the past for us were the present for him.

In his pictures, the *Promenade hors des murs,* the *Nouvel an* and the *Trentaines,* Leys did not imitate the old Flemings; he was himself a Fleming of the old days. One might have believed that on coming into the world in the Nineteenth Century, he was three hundred years behind time. Therefore we can not improve upon what Théophile Gautier has said of him. "Leys is not an imitator; he is of like kind." Everybody has noticed that there are moments in our lives when, by a phenomenon which seems to prove that Pythagoras was right, we clearly recall circumstances of a former life; we are suddenly transplanted into surroundings in which we find again with terrifying precision the details of a scene in which we took part several centuries ago. But these gleams which from time to time illuminate the depths of the human soul are only lightning flashes in the night of its past. Well, with Henri Leys, it seems that certain images of a previous existence have persisted in his spirit so that he has been able to reproduce them, not as a souvenir, but as after nature.

It is not only the costumes, the aspect of the gables and silhouettes in the mist that produce this restoration of the

past; it also results from the resurrection of the spirits that animated the people of that period. The people painted by Leys are not models of the present day wearing Renaissance clothes; they are souls of olden days. Their faces bear the trace of thoughts that are no longer ours, and of certain passions that vary in accordance with climate and creed and the evolution of history. It would be vain to stew in archaeology, to surround oneself with the wood engravings of Schauffelein, Burgmair, or Grun, to study Holbein's *Simulacra,* or to grow wan over the prints of Lucas Van Leyden, Dürer and Cranach; one would never produce anything but wearisome *pastiches* unless one possessed that moral intuition which is so astonishing in the works of Leys, that profound and intimate knowledge of what passed in the brains and hearts of our ancestors. The Antwerp artist penetrated to the bottom of their thoughts; he felt as they felt; he believed what they believed. In that lies his veritable originality; that constitutes his superiority. What in another would have looked like a cold marquetry of borrowed figures is with him a sincere conception, a sort of historical revelation. Every retrospective picture into which an artist has not put his whole heart will always look like a scene played by comedians.

Every century has its own figures, and it is not merely the tailor, the milliner, or the barber that makes them; it is the dominant idea, the concentration of beliefs of a period. The attitude of mind determines the facial expression.

When Henri Leys paints for us *Albrecht Dürer at Antwerp* with his wife and maid servant under the porch of an inn in company with Erasmus and Quentin Metsys, we think we are looking at a page of Albrecht Dürer's manuscript illustrated by himself. Is not this a sort of pretext to parade before the spectators, who here are the guests of the innkeeper, Joost Planckfeld, the great procession of Notre Dame, which took place on the Sunday after the Assumption, the artisan bodies with their banners, the archer guilds with their drums and fifes, costumed in foreign fashion, as Albrecht Dürer notes in his travels. Where Henri Leys is strongest, or at least most interesting, is in the works where he expresses feelings of olden days, or even of the present day. His picture of the *Catholics* is touching, and it is so quite as much by the eloquence of its chiaroscuro as by the expression of the figures that come to pray in the aisle of a low and mysterious church. Two women, one of whom carries a little sick child in her arms, are having a taper lit by a choir boy. The concentration and silence that reign in this picture, tinged with sadness and veiled with shadow, make it a painting that speaks tenderly to our hearts, and, moreover, the intensity of its tone and character impresses it indelibly on our memory.

If I am not mistaken this picture, the *Catholics,* is exceptional among the works of Leys, for this painter is essentially Protestant by the moral physiognomy of his paintings, and it is to the memory of the great personages of the Reformation that he has to devote his most striking

pictures and those that show the deepest feeling. *The Child Luther in the Streets of Eisenach* is a work of his that one can not possibly forget. Like his Flemish or German predecessors, particularly Holbein, Henri Leys has the talent of showing us deformed faces which, however, are never ugly because they are illuminated and transfigured by an internal flame. Thus, a woman with a short nose, prominent cheek bones, and thick lips forming a wide mouth is nevertheless full of charm because her face has an expression of simplicity, or repressed sorrow, or love. Also an *échevin,* whose cheeks are prematurely furrowed, whose nose is turned up and crooked and whose lips bulge with projecting teeth, attracts our attention because he has an air of good nature, rectitude and firmness.

You see a thickset ruddy child with a snub nose, black and wiry hair and coarse facial expression with common unformed features; yet you find it as interesting as if it were a pretty face, fresh, rosy and golden haired. You examine it with curiosity, and analyse its ugliness without feeling the slightest dislike for it. It stands on the pavement with three or four youthful companions as ugly as itself, and you are taken captive by these figures even before you know that they represent Luther and his comrades singing Christmas carols in the streets of Eisenach before towns-people who are equally lacking in good looks, with the exception of one fine lady, richly dressed, who is seated on a stone bench, and, with a charming air of Christian compassion and tenderness, looks at these poor street singers,

one of whom one day will trouble her conscience and perhaps convert her heart.

The Antwerp painter next shows us *Luther's Home in Wittenberg.* The child of the streets has grown up; his name is no longer unknown; the little boys who sang with him in the streets have become his disciples; their names are Melancthon, Pomeranus and Œcolampadus. Gathered together in Luther's house, they are seated around a table commenting on the Scriptures which the Reformer is explaining with concentrated heat and an air of authority. The room is lighted by rays that become golden by passing through the leaded panes of yellow glass which spread a poetic sentiment over this peaceful interior, with its rich and subdued tones and warm hangings. Against the window, under this stream of light stands Luther's wife, Catherine Bora, knitting, and this sweet face, the image of domestic happiness, personifies the family life that was a characteristic feature of early Protestantism. Over a door we see a full-length portrait of Frederick of Saxony.

Whether he be Protestant or Catholic, Henri Leys is a Christian painter, a pure painter, I mean that his place is in the centre of his own art, a thousand leagues from statuary, in the antipodes of paganism, like an artist who never knew that Antiquity had existed; for the predominance of painting over the other arts is peculiar to the Christian epochs, the result being that, as painting does not exclude ugliness, it has been able to bring forward

another beauty than that of the body and thus embrace the whole of nature, without condemning any model provided it has a soul. But Henri Leys does not express the Christian sentiment devotionally, after the manner of Flandrin; he expresses it like a respectful chronicler. He possesses the historic sense as much as, and even more than, the religious sense.

If we measure him as a painter, leaving out his archaeological erudition and his faithful relation of things of former days, Leys is an artist who stands in the front rank of the modern Belgian school, and it was not for nothing that the jury of the Universal Exposition twice awarded him the grand medal of honour, in 1855 and 1867. The competent judges admired, as we also admire, his opulent colours that harmonise under a surface of mystery, the warmth of his shadows, the force of his effects, which, however, are not concentrated, and the fascination of his backgrounds, which sometimes recall those of Peter de Hooch and Rembrandt. His painting forces our observation and bites into our imagination. The sumptuous reds are intensified by deep greens; the oranges and yellows glow, enhanced by sombre blues; but these violences are reconciled, appeased and melted in a warm and reddened combination that resembles the subdued splendours of the old Flemish tapestries, or Cordovan leathers.

It goes without saying that after receiving such honours in foreign lands, Leys became a prophet in his own country. There he became more and more respected, consulted and

applauded. King Leopold loaded him with crosses and ribbons, and gave him the title of Baron. But, what was worth much more to him, he was engaged to decorate the great hall of the Antwerp Hôtel de Ville. This noble and important work, begun in 1863, included a number of historical portraits from Godfrey de Bouillon to Philip the Fair, as well as six great principal paintings destined to glorify, by examples chosen from history, the communal franchises of the city of Antwerp and the liberties granted by the law. The subjects and meaning of these six mural paintings are as follows: *La Joyeuse entrée de l'archiduc Charles in 1514,* shows that every sovereign before entering a city had to take an oath to respect its laws; *L'Admission du Genois Pallavicini* shows what was the ancient right of citizenship. *La Défense d'Anvers* and *La Duchess de Parme remettant les clefs au bourgomestre* reminds us that the magistracy had the sole right to convoke the militia and city government. *La Landjuweel of 1561* and *L'Ouverture de la grande foire de 1562* were conceived with the aim of showing that the arts as well as industry lived and developed under the protection of the City Fathers.

The six compositions which decorate the Antwerp Hôtel de Ville are painted in fresco. They display all the fine qualities of Leys in their highest degree, as well as all his faults, which consist in often giving his figures large heads and big feet, in paying no attention to aerial

perspective (in order to resemble more closely the Old Masters) and generally in not paying sufficient heed to the sacrifices that are necessary and indispensable in the art of painting.

LE MATIN

(J. B. C. Corot)

RENE MENARD

JEAN BAPTISTE CAMILLE COROT was born in Paris in 1796; his parents were in easy circumstances. After passing some years at the Lycée of Rouen, he was placed as assistant to a linen draper in the Rue St. Honoré at Paris. Having no taste whatever for the line of life to which he was destined, he abandoned business to study painting with the landscape-painter, Michallon. "I made my first drawing," he said, "from nature at Arcueil, under the eye of the painter, whose only advice to me was to render with the utmost fidelity everything that I saw before me. His lesson has been useful; it has remained the invariable ground of my disposition, always inclined to accuracy." It will be remarked that artists often misunderstand their own temperament. Corot is a dreamer, and never was a realist. But if the exact rendering of nature is not precisely his goal, it is assuredly the safest road to reach it; and Michallon, by giving him this direction, rendered him a real service that he was first to acknowledge.

Michallon, now completely forgotten, enjoyed at one time a certain amount of reputation. When only conventional landscape was known, with the inevitable temple in

Le Matin — Corot

the background, and the foreground composed of big leaves as *repoussoir,* Michallon was looked upon as a seeker after realism, because his subjects were chosen from nature instead of being composed with the sole help of imagination. Still, if he did not invent his landscapes, he painted them by routine, and was very far from the vigorous observation of nature adopted by the French school after Constable. Corot learnt with him to make nature useful, but his dreamy disposition soon found in Victor Bertin a master more in harmony with his artistic temperament. Excellent draughtsman and indifferent colourist, Victor Bertin knew better than anybody else how to arrange the composition of a landscape. He was not opposed to study from nature, but had no great admiration for the rustic scenes of our country, and always dreamt of Italy and the Roman Campagna.

It was under this impression that Corot started for Italy, whence he sent his first pictures. *Vue prise à Narni* and *Souvenir de la Campagne à Rome,* exhibited in the Salon of 1827. These pictures did not meet with any success, and it must be said that they were far from possessing the charm of the painter's later works. Corot groped about a long time before finding this path. His first works—could it be believed?—sometimes give an impression of dryness. Formerly he used to paint his pictures entirely from nature; later on, he became aware that, in order to interest with a landscape, it was less important to reproduce a scene with accuracy than to convey the impression of it faithfully; accordingly he adopted a method of work more in conformity with his inclination. Nevertheless, he

continued to make numerous studies from nature, and his portfolios were filled with drawings of the utmost exactness. But once in the studio, he painted from inspiration and in full liberty. Then his accumulated impressions would combine in his brain and take the poetical colour so charming to us. Even when he found in nature a subject to please him, he generally altered it on returning to his studio. We frequently recognise in Corot's pictures the place that he has painted, the group of trees on the side, the small houses in the background, the old boat stranded on the beach, and the very cows that graze there. Before his model, he painted what he saw, but afterwards he veiled it with a vaporous atmosphere, bathed the leaves with dew, and gave to the sky the limpidity whose secret he alone possesses.

It was by degrees that Corot began to be appreciated by artists. There was around him a small circle of warm admirers, principally composed of young men anxious for his advice. This little success, although unprofitable, was a sort of compensation for the indifference of the public and the disdain of the family. His parents were convinced that their son had acted like a fool by giving up business for a profession which brought him nothing, and could only be considered in his case as a polite accomplishment.

Corot was very much loved by young men, to whom he gave advice with a sort of paternal kindness. The number of those that he helped is very great indeed, and his services were rendered with infinite delicacy. He was often

seen at the Hôtel des Ventes, especially when the works of a beginner were to be sold, because in such cases he did his best to excite the zeal of amateurs. He was a robust, corpulent man, who bore some likeness to a farmer with his red and sanguine complexion; but his eye was extremely refined and his talk delightful.

Of late, no painter has been so much exalted by criticism; he was not even reproached with the uniformity of his pictures, nor with the calculated absence of coloured tones and rigid forms. Everybody knows that mythology is now banished from our landscapes, and that it is the fashion to laugh at the nymphs whose cadenced steps had so much charm for our fathers; still it is one of the not unfrequent inconsistencies of French criticism that it does not hesitate to praise, in Corot, a choice of subjects that it condemns in theory. It is true that his nymphs add no great value to his pictures, but they are placed with so much judgment that it is impossible to realise his landscapes without them. However, he sometimes sought to render nature without alteration; for instance in his *Vues de Ville d'Avray et des Environs de Paris;* but, like all true artists, Corot assimilates all he sees to his inward dream, and the varied effects of nature uniformly appear to him under the same poetical vision. Had he been painting in Egypt by the Pyramids, he would have found there his silvery tones and his mysterious bowers. Whether he evokes out of mythology some graceful tale, or whether he renders in a manner that he intends to be positive, some particular and familiar scene,

Corot always leaves in his work a poetical perfume which is his personality, and is as good as a signature.

This dreamer was not assuredly a brutal copyist nor a seeker after coarse reality, but an observer whose mind was constantly open to impressions, and never felt satiated before nature. Either in his walks in the streets or in the fields, or in a railway carriage, he always carried with him a small note-book, which he filled up with memoranda unintelligible for anybody but himself, and which were highly valuable to him. They generally consisted in little rough pencil lines, in the midst of which he placed a small circle, or square, or any other conventional sign. The small circle meant the highest light, the small square the deepest shade; and these rapid indications were precious reminiscences to him.

Corot is *par excellence* the painter of morning. He can render with more felicity than anybody else the silvery light on dewy fields, the vague foliage of trees mirrored in calm water. He was not fond of the noonday light, and it was always in the earliest morning that he went out to paint from nature. He has himself described his artistic impressions in letters which foreshadow his pictures, and we can not end this article better than by giving one extract out of them: "A landscape painter's day is delightful. He gets up early at three in the morning before sunrise; he goes to sit under a tree and watches and waits. There is not much to be seen at first. Nature is like a white veil, upon which some masses are vaguely sketched in profile.

Everything smells sweet, everything trembles under the freshening breeze of the dawn. *Bing!* The sun gets clearer; he has not yet torn the veil of gauze behind which hide the meadow, the valley, the hills on the horizon. The nocturnal vapours still hang like silvery tufts upon the cold green grass. *Bing! Bing!* The first ray of the sun —another ray. The small flowerets seem to awake joyously; each of them has its trembling drop of drew. The chilly leaves are moved by the morning air. One sees nothing; everything is there. The landscape lies entirely behind the transparent gauze of the ascending mist, gradually sucked by the sun, and permits us to see, as it ascends, the silver-striped river, the meadow, the cottages, the far-receding distance. At last you can see what you imagined at first. *Bam!* The sun has risen. *Bam!* The peasant passes at the bottom of the field, with his cart and oxen. *Ding! Ding!* It is the bell of the ram, which leads the flock. *Bam!* Everything sparkles, shines; everything is in full light, light soft and caressing as yet. The backgrounds with their simple contour and harmonious tone are lost in the infinite sky through an atmosphere of azure and mist. The flowers lift up their heads; the birds fly here and there. A rustic, mounted on a white horse, disappears in the narrowing path. The rounded willows seem to turn like wheels on the river edge. And the artist paints away . . . paints away! Ah! the beautiful bay cow, chest deep in the wet grasses; I will paint her! *Crac!* there she is! Famous! Capital! what a good likeness she

is! *Boum! Boum!* The sun scorches the earth. *Boum!* All becomes heavy and grave. The flowers hang down their heads, the birds are silent, the noises of the village reach us. These are the heavy works; the blacksmith, whose hammer sounds on the anvil. *Boum!* Let us go back. All is visible, there is no longer anything. Let us get some breakfast at the farm. A good slice of homemade bread, with butter newly churned; some eggs, cream and ham! *Boum!* Work away, my friends; I rest myself. I enjoy my siesta, and dream about my morning landscape. I dream my picture, later I shall paint my dream." Is not this Corot himself?

FOREST CLEARING*

(*Narcisse-Virgilio Diaz de la Peña*)

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

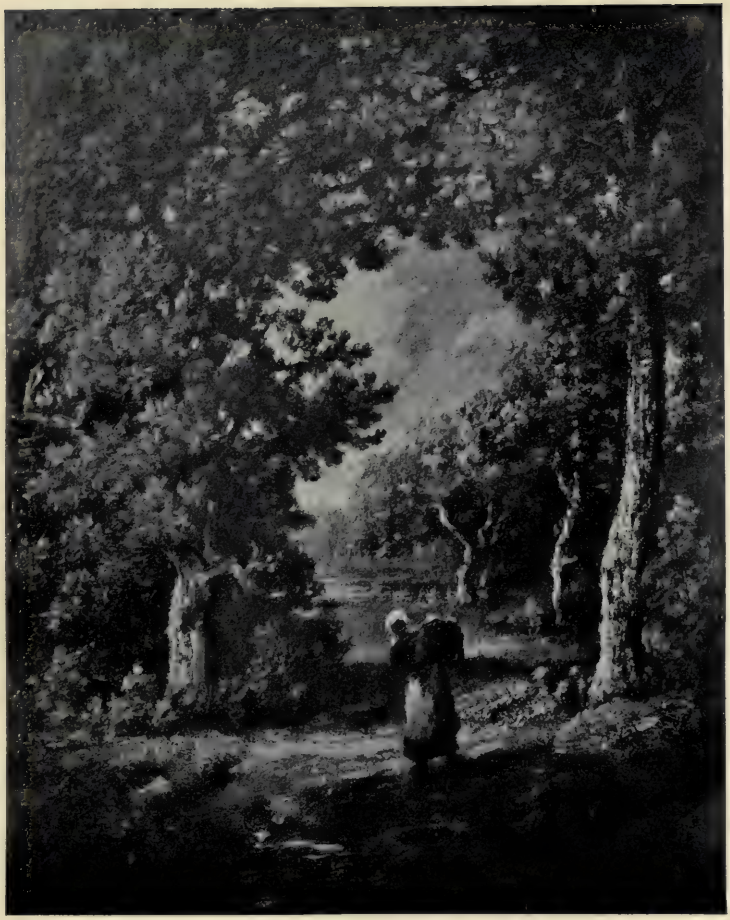
THE painter of the *Nymph Endormie* and the *Fin d'un Beau Jour*—" the Anacreon of the Bas-Bréau "—was a Frenchman only by accident. His father and mother, Tomas Diaz and Maria Velasco, were Spaniards of Salamanca, driven into exile by the failure of a conspiracy against King Joseph Bonaparte. Their child was born in Bordeaux; while the father exiled from France, as well as from his native country, betook himself alone, to Norway, and passing thence to London, died in that city, just as his wife was on the point of setting sail from the Gironde to join him. Being utterly friendless, she came north, to Paris first, and then to Sèvres, where she supported herself

* He delighted in thick foliage with sunlight streaming through in pathways through woods brilliant with the setting sun. He introduced mythological figures as light-bearers to make his compositions more splendid. At one time he made nymphs, dryads, etc., the principal objects in his pictures. Not being a draughtsman of form, these efforts were not successful and were soon abandoned. . . . There are several of his pictures in the Louvre which show the three variations in his style. In the one called *La Clairière,* or *The Forest Clearing,* there is but one figure, and that only as a light-bearer, to introduce bright spots where Diaz wished to put them and where they could not be put without the presence of a figure. This is in Diaz's best style and an excellent specimen. It is quite small, only about one and a half feet by one foot.—*D. Cady Eaton.*

and her child by giving lessons in Spanish and Italian. At the latter place she died, and Narcisse-Virgilio, now a boy of ten, was adopted by the Protestant pastor of Bellevue, with whom he remained until he came to Paris to seek his fortune.

When he was fifteen, he got stung in the left foot by a poison-fly (he was to die of a snake-bite more than half a century after), and twice he had to suffer amputation. But his energy, of mind and body alike, was extraordinary, and he went on riding and dancing and swimming as before. Being called upon to choose a trade, he took—like Raffet and Jules Dupré—to china-painting. But, whenever he could, he engaged himself in oils as well. He worked under Souchon (1787-1857); and in 1831 he got his first picture into the Salon. At this time, and for some years, he was only, as it were, an understudy of Delacroix. He painted flowers, battles, portraits, naked women, anything that would sell (it is on record that for some of these works he was content to take as little as five francs apiece; and even his colour—in after years so rich, so distinguished, so eminently personal—was imitated from his leader's. At forty he was still learning to draw; but so early as 1836-37, he had fallen under the inspiring influence of Rousseau, and was on the way to become the great artificer in sunshine and leafage that we know.

For a dozen years or so he exhibited rather unsuccessfully than not. But in 1844 he won a Third Class medal with a *Bas-Bréau,* an *Orientale* and a *Bohémiens se rendant à*



Forest-Clearing Diaz

une Fête; in 1846, a Second Class, with the *Délaissées,* the *Magicienne,* the *Jardin des Amours,* an *Intérieur de Foret* a *Léda;* and in 1848, a First Class with a *Diane partant pour la Chasse,* a *Meute dans la Forêt de Fontainebleau,* a *Vénus et Adonis;* while in 1851 he exhibited a portrait, a *Baigneuse,* and his *Amour Désarmé,* and received the ribbon of the Legion of Honour. Henceforward life was easy enough; and though in 1855 he failed with his most ambitious work—the much-debated and much-ridiculed *Dernières Larmes*—he succeeded splendidly with half a dozen others: the *Rivales,* the *Nymphe tourmentée par l'Amour, the Fin d'un Beau Jour,* among them. His last Salon was that of 1859; but if he abstained from exhibiting, he nowise ceased from production. In 1860, he lost his son Emile, a painter like himself, and, like himself, a pupil of Rousseau; but not even that great affliction could break his spirit or abate his interest in Art. There were fifteen years of life before him still—"*railleur, mais non amer, spirituel, parfois un peu brusque, au fond bon et franc comme du pain de froment*"—and fifteen years of work. To the end he lived but to paint; and, as we have seen, his death, at sixty-eight, was a result of accident. Millet and Corot had passed the year before; and when he followed them, of the great and famous group to which we owe the best of modern art only Dupré and Daubigny were left alive.

Diaz had many masters—Delacroix, Correggio, Millet, Rousseau, Prudhon—and succumbed to many influences

in turn. But, if he followed, it was only that he might learn to lead; if he copied, it was the more completely to express himself. His master qualities are fancy and charm; but, capricious as he was and enchanting as he never failed to be, he was a devout student and a rare observer of nature.

"*Personne,*" says M. Jules Dupré, "*n'a compris mieux que lui la loi de la lumière, la magie, et pour ainsi dire la folie, du soleil dans les feuilles et les sous-bois.*" What gives his work its peculiar quality of delightfulness is the combination of lovely fact with graceful fiction! His world would be Arcadia if it were not so real—would be the world we live in if it did not teem with exquisite impossibilities. I think of him as an amicable and light-hearted Rembrandt. He had a touch of the madness of genius, or that madness of the sunshine (of which his old companion speaks) would certainly have escaped him. And rightly to express his ideas and sensations, he made himself a wonderful vocabulary. His palette was composed, not of common pigments, but of molten jewels; they clash in the richest chords, they sing in triumphant unisons, as do the elements of music in a score of Berlioz. If they meant nothing they would still be delicious. But beyond them is Diaz—the poet, the *fantaisiste,* the artist; and that makes them unique.

THE BANKS OF THE LOIRE IN SPRING

(*Théodore Rousseau*)

T. A. CASTAGNARY

IT is an old truth that eclogues and idylls have almost always been the consequence of social agitations. Irritated by the tumult of the world, the poets and dreamers take refuge in the peace of the meadows and in the contemplation of calm and serene nature.

The resurrection of landscape in France in the last few years* arises in great part from this cause. The literary and political quarrels of this century have repelled many minds in the direction of peace, and engendered, by way of reaction, the current of ideas to which we owe, in literature, *La Mare au Diable, Jeanne* and *Les Paysans;* and in art, the works of Rousseau, Troyon, Daubigny and Rosa Bonheur. The exaggerations of Romanticism and the debauches of colour have precipitated this double movement. It seems that, disgusted with its own corruption and satiated with violent emotions, society has made a general return towards the truth. It has experienced a sudden thirst for calm and sweet emotions. A vague odour of the farmyard, brought by the country breeze, has reached its nostrils. It has perceived, far from infected towns,

*(Written in 1857).

grouped as in one of Leopold Robert's pictures, rural life with its labours, its pleasures, and its simple and touching poetry. It has remembered the hidden path in the wheat, the mill turned by the wind, the water lapping among the roots of the willow, blue distances and mysterious depths of background. Then it has demanded nature and much nature from those who serve it. And the poet, the novelist, the painter and everybody has set to work to gratify it. It is not only Théodore Rousseau transporting to canvas living nature with its lights, its scents and its rustlings; it is not only Rosa Bonheur applying her robust touch and virile manner to pastoral life; it is Lelia, disillusioned, trying to calm the tempest of her heart with the spectacle of the fields, and coming to pour out the currents of her deeply troubled soul in the breast of the universal mother; it is Balzac asking the woods and plains for a few leaves and cooling breezes to refresh the weary actors of the *Comédie humaine* in the evening of their long day. By these latter landscape has entered into literature, and has taken a place there which action no longer thinks of disputing. In the last serious work of this period, *Madame Bovary,* nature follows the developments of the story step by step, mingles with the intimate life of the characters, and takes such a part in it that to some extent it makes itself an accomplice of their actions, and when the heroine succumbs, nobody can say whether she yields to the eloquence of her seducer, or the voluptuous excitation of the environing landscape.

Banks of the Loire in Spring — Rousseau

In spite of the radical difference between the proceedings of the poet and the painter, I have insisted on not separating these two movements that issue from one single effort. In both courses, in literature as in art, the attempt has been crowned with full success; but it is particularly the interpretation of nature by colour that has made rapid progress. In less than a quarter of a century, landscape in France has been raised to such a height that I do not know that the artistic sovereignty of Hobbema, Cuyp and Ruysdael, has not found itself threatened. In any case the old Dutch masters are the only ones left whose work in this field can still bear comparison with ours.

One of those who have contributed most to the elevation of landscape among us is Théodore Rousseau.

Théodore Rousseau is a true master of the art in the old sense of the word; he has shared in genius and all the miseries which pertain to it. His obscure struggles, his energy and his perseverance are sufficiently known to the public. It was not till 1849, after twenty years of fierce efforts, that the greatest landscape painter of the present day found himself admitted to the honour of a medal of the first class. The hour of just reward never arrives for the good workman until his task is almost completed. During the hard times of his youth, he had no support except the esteem of a few scarce friends, and beyond that he knew neither the sweetness of encouragement, nor the taste of praise. But afterwards, he received compensation. The Universal Exposition by bringing into full view the many sides of this

splendid genius, the clearness, precision, freshness and exquisite finesse of this deep and charming mind, consecrated his tardy reputation. To-day, Théodore Rousseau has reached maturity; he is in full possession of himself; and he possesses to the very depths all the resources of his art. It seems that in the road he has chosen, he can hardly reach a higher eminence. The six canvases which he exhibits, admirable fruits of his ripe talent, do not show us anything new or unexpected, but they fully confirm all the qualities with which we are already acquainted in him.

The most remarkable of these landscapes is called *Les Bords de la Loire au printemps*. It is one of those small canvasses in which Rousseau loves to widen and extend an immense horizon. The grey river, admirably transparent, swells between its winding banks lapping the sides as it advances. On the right is a little house, with a red-tiled roof, sheltered by poplars. A little in front of it a clump of oaks of most beautiful form stretches its strong branches over the water. At the foot of the trees, in a little inlet, a robust peasant unmoors a flat boat and seizes his oar to cross the stream. Farther off beneath the boughs, we see a woman in red washing linen in the stream. To the left, the narrow banks are sparsely wooded and, jutting into the water, alternate, so to speak, with the waves, and grow fainter as the distance increases from the foreground. The horizon recedes before our eyes. It would be difficult to give with a pen an exact idea of this fresh and tranquil landscape, made up entirely of familiar things, and in which

solidity and finesse have an equal share under a full and harmonious light.

Théodore Rousseau is the master, Théodore Rousseau is the king of landscape.

A greatly disputed king, I know. But where is the superiority in art or letters that was admitted at its first appearance, without objection and without a storm? Contemporaries are never agreed on this kind of consecration of genius; they seem to dread them, and if they are pressed to make kings, it is never in order of intellect. I shall not therefore pay any attention to the opposition which my opinion may arouse, but content myself, for confirmation of my personal admiration, with the adhesion of many cultured intellects.

He is the king: from the eminence of his vast talents, he dominates that glorious pleiad of landscape painters, who are already immortal, whose initiator he was, and whom he led into the new way. With them, but at their head, he renewed landscape and put new youth into the aged art of Claude Lorrain, Cuyp, Ruysdael, Hobbema and Paul Potter. He has penetrated more deeply than they into the feelings and the forms of things, the harmony of relations, the fluctuations of effects, the impression of sensible realities on the organs, and their vibrations in the human soul. With an inexhaustible invention and rare execution, he has brought an astonishing vivacity into the interpretation of nature. Firm and concise in details, he is infinite in sentiment: to the sensibility of Jean-Jacques, he adds the breadth, the

mysterious melancholy, and, in some degree, the sonority of Virgil.

The rude trials to which this great artist was subjected, his retreat, his first works, his obstinate struggle are well known. A friendly hand has written the story in moving pages.

"You, dear Rousseau," said Théophile Thoré, the only writer, who, after Diderot, has shown any originality in this literature of the *salons,* now become so stupid, "you practised with simplicity an exclusive detachment from everything that did not belong to your art. You always remained a stranger to the passions that agitate us, and even to the legitimate interests of ordinary life, you lived like the anchorites of the Thebaid.

"Do you remember the days when in our attics in the *Rue Taitbout*, sitting on our narrow window sills with our legs hanging over the edge of the roof, we looked at the corners of the houses and the chimney stacks which you compared to mountains and tall trees scattered over broken ground? Do you remember the little tree in the Rothschild garden that was visible between two roofs? That was the only verdure that was given to us to see.

"In the Spring we were interested in the breaking of the buds of the little poplar, and we counted them as they fell in the Autumn. And with that tree, that slit of foggy sky, with that forest of massed houses, over which our eyes wandered as over a plain, you created mirages which often deceived you in your painting with regard to the reality of

natural effects. You struggled alone by excess of power, nourishing yourself with your own invention without renewing it with the sight of living nature. At night, tormented with ceaseless variable and floating images, lacking repose on real landscapes bathed in sunlight,—at night, you got up feverish and despairing. By the light of a feeble lamp, you tried new effects on the canvas that had often before been covered with colour, and in the morning I found you fatigued and sad as the evening before, but still ardent and inexhaustible.

"Thither George Sand was brought by Eugène Delacroix to see you one day. For you, who never thought about public favour and who always followed art for love, this was nevertheless, I think, one of the happy days of your life. The two greatest painters of the Nineteenth Century, Eugène Delacroix and George Sand, came to treat you as a brother; Delacroix modestly confessing that his palette was dull beside your colour,—he who has painted the loveliest skies in the world!—and George Sand decrying her Berri landscapes beside yours of the Rue Taitbout,—she who has painted with words better than Claude or Hobbema! Is it not true that then you forgot your sleepless nights and days of despair?

"It was the certitude of your strong and original impressions as much as the sympathy of true artists which supported you in this obscure struggle; and, gradually, in spite of your solitude and modesty, in spite of the perseverance of the jury which always refused you publicity, your name

spread even if your works were unknown. People said that a great painter was maturing in a little studio closed to vulgar curiosity. At every Salon people wrote about Rousseau's landscapes as if they had been exhibited at the Louvre. Eugène Delacroix, George Sand, Ary Scheffer—and a few others related what they had seen so well that the studio was forced by intellectual connoisseurs.

'To-day popular success and renown, which have never been your aim, are the legitimate result of your love and your laborious life. At the same time, the wild and restless talents of your early youth have been calmed by your experiences and adventures into the resources of colour. You have gained a victorious execution that no longer balks at the difficulty of expression; you are sure of your form and style for the translation of your inmost poetic thought. You have entered your period of productive force: now show your flowers and fruits."

The artist has kept the critic's promise.

He has produced the fruits and flowers of his radiant maturity in profusion.

The exhibition of 1855 grouped some of his masterpieces which compelled the admiration of the most refractory. After that the robust worker never stopped. Every year brought forth pictures which, if they added nothing to his worth, at least completed the series of his studies and showed the extent and flexibility of his marvellous talents.

Rousseau's general manner is particularly characterised by his penetrating poetry and his simple and manly panthe-

ism. He has no knowledge of violent prejudices; he never sacrifices one detail to another, but only to the whole; he does not summarise various effects in order to impose a single impression by main force. On the contrary, he makes every effort to preserve the equilibrium of things, and their natural relations. The unity of his picture is to be found, not in the simplification of material means, but in the concentration of its feeling. Personal in the processes he employs, he ceases to be so in the effect he produces; he attains the sovereign impartiality and the pantheistic indifference of universal nature.

He does not draw you, like Millet, towards the mournful epic of rustic lives in order to accentuate their savage physiology and sad solemnity; he does not, like Daubigny, refine the grace of green meads, flowing streams and spring-time trees; he does not, like Corot, take you into twilight regions where the light, the freshness and the shadow sing a celestial gamut, the last notes of which seem to extend into the infinite. No: simple, calm, thoroughly impregnated with naturalism, he respects the exact relation between trees, animals, man and the sky. He knows the solidity of the ground, and the radiance of the sky; and, between these two splendours the dull sluggishness of animal and vegetable life. He translates his various impressions of them without making himself a judge of them, with a child's severity, well knowing that however multiple they may be, they will find their unity in you and will always be in harmony with those which the external world gives you.

Finally, he opens wide to you all the gates of nature. Like the country around the town, his landscapes are spread before you.

There you can sit down or walk about, dream or think at your leisure. You breathe; you live. Don't be afraid to let yourself go to the artist; wherever he carries you, be sure that he will not bend beneath you, and that he will not get out of breath. Like the great masters of every genre; like those whose loins are strong, whose high and calm thought is self-supporting, without foreign aid, finding his *raison d'être* and his effect in himself, like Homer, Shakespeare, Victor Hugo and Prudhon, he presents that indefinable mixture of power and grace which is characteristic of all beauty. In the finite, he is ceaselessly pursuing the infinite, and he attains it. That is the secret of his superiority. In fact, beyond that there is no elevation, beyond that no poetry!

O Nature! O Fine Arts! If the Heavens declare the Glory of God, the Arts sing the genius of Man and testify to his greatness.

THE BIG OAK

(Jules Dupré)

ERNEST CHESNEAU

THE great artist died at an advanced age, almost an octogenarian indeed, on the 6th of October, 1889, in the picturesque district of L'Isle-Adam, where he had spent practically the whole of his life. He was, in fact, born at Nantes; but by a mere chance, for his father was a manufacturer of porcelain, and a member of one of the oldest families residing in the little village of Parmain, facing L'Isle-Adam, on the other shore of the Oise. Brittany, therefore, left no mark on the artist's mind. He had, no doubt, the energetic, patient, and tenacious determination which is characteristic of the old Celtic race; but this is a quality which flourishes on other soils than that of Brittany.

Small, thin, wiry, eager and voluble, with a keen, clear brain, which never lost itself in dreamy vapours, and had no tendency to mysticism, Jules Dupré, with his handsome, refined face, blue eyes and regular features, framed in a flowing beard and silver locks—once golden—brushed back from his brow, was a thorough Frenchman of the Isle-de-France, the cradle of our race.

He was born in 1811, and so belongs to the great generation of "Romantics" which fanned into a blaze the dead fire of living art. The young painter learnt the rudiments

of his craft in the practical application of design to the decoration of pottery. But while helping his father in the artistic part of his manufacture, he wandered about the neighbouring country, bringing home studies painted on the spot with simple fidelity. Thus the distinguished and learned M. Larroumet was justified in saying over Dupré's grave that he had never had a master, and that before he had found his brethren in genius in our picture-galleries, he had been able to discern the true path by the unaided study of Nature, far away from any school or tradition. Very soon, however, his father allowed him to devote himself exclusively to art. Young Dupré came to Paris, and at the age of twenty exhibited, for the first time, three pictures in the Salon of 1831.

Two of these, both forest scenes (*The Heart of the Forest* and *The Skirt of a Wood*) were views painted direct from Nature in La Creuse, where his father had for a time undertaken the management of a china factory belonging to the Marquis de Bonneval.

I give a list of the works he exhibited at very intermittent intervals:

1833. Meal-Time; View near Argentan; View in the Environs of Paris; View of Cour, Valley of Montmorency.

1834. Three landscapes: Near Abbeville; Argenton-sur-Creuse; Châteauroux; and *A Cottage Interior in Le Berry*.

1835. Pasture-lands in the Limousin; Near Abbeville; View near Southampton.

The Big Oak — Dupré

1836. A View in England; and a water-colour *Cottage Interior in the Limousin.*

1837 and 1838. Nothing in the Salon; but in

1839. Seven landscapes. Among these were *A Village Bridge over the River Foy* (Indre) and another by the same name; with some views in the Lower Limousin and in Normandy; *The Bathers and Animals Fording a Stream.*

After this for thirteen years the painter exhibited nothing in the Salon. He reappeared, however, in 1852 with three pictures: *Pastures, The Outskirts of a Village in the Landes,* and *A Sunset.*

This was the last time he exhibited at the Salon; nor did he send anything to the Universal Exhibition of 1855. But to that of 1867 he contributed a dozen works which may be regarded as so many masterpieces:—*The Forest of Compiègne, A Winding Road in the Forest of Compiègne, Animals Crossing a Bridge in Le Berry, A Sheepfold in Le Berry, Marshes in Le Sologne, The Return of the Flock, The Sluice-Gates, A Stream in Picardy, The Gorge of the Eaux-Chaudes* (Basses Pyrénées), *Souvenir of the Landes,* and *A Road in the Landes.*

Jules Dupré, who had won a second-class medal at the Salon of 1833, was awarded no higher premium than a second-class medal again at the Great Exhibition of 1867, though his talent was fully worthy of a medal of honour. But he had allowed himself to be forgotten. And yet, he had been recognised, not to say famous, from the first. His *View of the Fields near Southampton* in 1835, had won him

congratulations from all the golden youth of the Romantic School, and the friendship of Decamps, Jadin, Eugène Devéria, and Eugène Delacroix, who indeed was never tired of seeing and studying this picture. Delacroix, as is well known, took the greatest interest in the methods and treatment adopted by these early sincere and literal landscape-painters, in their perpetual trouble to transcribe the reality of natural phenomena. He learnt from the style of work which they adopted certain lessons which it was hard to derive direct from Nature in view of the class of subjects he preferred. It was for this reason that, some years earlier, he had watched Paul Huet paint his picture called *The Horseman* from first to last; and, for the same reason, he was passionately interested in the works of Constable, which he happened to see before they were exhibited in 1824.

Struck by their beauty and fine texture, he went back to his Studio and began again on his *Massacre at Scio,* then nearly finished for exhibition in the same Salon; gave substance to the lights, introduced a quantity of rich half-tints, gave transparency to the shadows by glazing, made the blood circulate and the muscles live in his figures. The young school was returning to the right principle by drinking at the living fount of Nature.

After the Salon of 1835, Jules Dupré was hailed by the whole of the militant fraternity as one of themselves. But if he benefited by the support of some of his elder contemporaries, he, in his turn, devoted himself to discovering and helping other and younger talents who were fighting the

same battle. Thus he opened a path for Théodore Rousseau. M. Jules Claretie, a relation of Dupré's, describes him, at the height of his own reputation and glory, as carrying his young friend's pictures from one to another, showing them off, praising them and making three several efforts to have one of Rousseau's landscapes exhibited in the Salon. He even induced him to leave his attic room in the Rue Taitbout, and took a studio for him where the two painters, working side by side, produced not a few pictures which will count to the credit of the modern French School.

I should like to depict, not merely the friend, but also the man, as a talker and thinker. He had the gift of giving his artistic dicta a singularly happy, noble and powerful form. "Every work of art," said he, "ought to strike the senses only to penetrate the mind; like a tree whose crown is under the open sky, but its roots in the heart of the earth." The simile is really striking. I may quote another of his remarks, which gives evidence of a very profound study of Nature: "There is no such thing in Nature as the sky," he would often say. "The sky is in front of a tree as well as behind it; it is everywhere. The sky is in the air."

And in point of fact, a critic who knew him well, M. Alfred Sensier, has told us that Jules Dupré painted the sky last in his pictures. He always endeavoured to paint on the system of etchers, merging the tree and background into the infinitude of the sky in such a way as to represent the depth of air and space; it was a system in which he had great confidence, which gave him, no doubt, a considerable amount of

labour, but which produced a singularly vivid result when he had achieved the ethereal effect at which he aimed: the painting, in fact, of air and space.

At the Centenary Exhibition in the Champ de Mars we have seen a very fine collection of the works of Jules Dupré, and among them some of his powerful sea-pieces. They were painted at the time of the siege of Paris 1870-71, when, for ten months, he lived shut up in his house at Cayeux-sur-Mer, with nothing to be seen but the limitless surges.

The paintings he sent to the Triennial Exhibition in 1883 brought upon him some very harsh and unmerited criticism. The new generation had no sympathy with his work. The great Romantic School of landscape breathed its last with Jules Dupré. Those who would emulate him, his successors, men by whose cradles he stood, and who have followed in his wake, have brought to landscape-painting—an art as infinite as Nature itself—another reading and a different interpretation. But I find no one among our modern generation of landscape painters who sees storm-clouds and lashing water, desolate forests, lonely beaches, towering cliffs—in short, Nature in her heroic moods—with such intensity, breadth and genuine emotion; and no one, who, if he should thus see and understand it, can express it with such passionate and poetical grandeur.

LE PRINTEMPS

(*Charles François Daubigny*)

DAVID CROAL THOMSON

DAUBIGNY, though, like Corot, classed as a member of the Barbizon School, does not strictly—at least, in the geographical sense—belong to the group. Probably he was frequently at Barbizon, and, in any case, was good friends with his fellow-artists living there; but he lived more on the rivers Seine and Oise, and more in the country to the northwest of Paris than in the south where Barbizon and Fontainebleau are. The Oise was, indeed, his favourite watering-place and the majority of his famous pictures were produced in its locality.

But by poetry and power, Daubigny belongs entirely to the Barbizon School. The sentiment in his daylight pictures has much in common with Corot, while his sunsets possess qualities not very far removed from those of Théodore Rousseau. His finest efforts are clear and luminous in colour, with something akin to Corot, yet with a difference easily discernible in a picture, though difficult to describe in words. Often they are stronger than Corot in execution, but not so masculine as Rousseau—a kind of half-way between the two, and yet different from either. Withal Daubigny is entirely individual; for no one, even with only a little experience, can fail to observe how he varies from

Corot, as well as from Rousseau, while showing something of the feeling expressed by both these painters.

Daubigny came from a thoroughly artistic family. His father was a landscape-painter; his uncle and his aunt were miniature painters; and most of the family friends were learned in the fine arts. Little wonder then that from his youngest years, Daubigny was accustomed to use the pencil; that, in fact, he knew how to draw before he knew how to read. He had not very much ordinary schooling, for his mother, who was his teacher, died while he was young, and his education was never completed.

Charles François Daubigny was born on the 15th of February, 1817, and, like Rousseau and Corot, he was a native of Paris. Why town-born people should turn out the best landscape-painters might form a good text for some original writer to think out. Daubigny, however, had an advantage over his colleagues, for, being somewhat delicate, he was sent from Paris to the country while very young, and for several years he lived at Valmondois, on the Oise, about fifteen miles northwest from Paris. There with Nurse Bazot, the weakly child grew into boyhood, and most of his earliest impressions were of the delightful country in that neighbourhood. Naturally, too, when he was big enough to travel alone, he spent all his holidays with his old nurse; and when he had saved money, after he became recognised, his first thought was a house in the vicinity. So much has it been thought that Daubigny was a native of the Oise country that frequently pictures of superior quality, representing

Le Printemps — Daubigny

one of the villages on the river, have been named by too credulous dealers *The Birthplace of Daubigny*. Certain it is that Daubigny often painted these villages, but equally certain it is that he was not born in one of them.

It was the summer of 1835 that Daubigny spent in Italy, visiting Rome, Naples and Florence, seeing and studying all the old masters in these cities. The landscapes of Jan Bott and of Claude Lorrain chiefly interested him, and he also laid the foundations of some life-long friendships.

The first work Daubigny had hung at the Paris Salon was in 1838, when he exhibited a view of the apse of Notre Dame from the Ile de St. Louis. But he was not at all sure of his *métier,* for in 1840 he painted a *St. Jerome in the Desert,* a curious subject for one who was afterwards to become a master of landscape; but the truth is, that Daubigny's journey to Italy had rather hurt him than helped him, and it was only by an apparent chance that he did not devote himself to historical painting, in which probably he never would have achieved fame. His studies in Italy had led him away from nature, and he wanted to emulate some of the old masters, whose works he could not but admire. This *St. Jerome,* painted at twenty-three, was considered somewhat of a success, and he entered as a competitor for the *Prix de Rome* at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. He studied in Delacroix's studio for six months, and duly passed the first examination for the *Prix,* which is the chief aim of all young French painters. Eight students were elected, and of these Daubigny was the third. But unfortunately he forgot, or

had never been told, that it was necessary to attend the day before the final examination to hear the subject to be painted given out. He went to Vincennes a few miles off, to spend the day, in order to divert his thoughts; and although a messenger was sent to his house, he did not know, because of his absence, until the next day, that his name had been cancelled and his opportunity lost. This, of course, was a dreadful blow to the young artist, and all the more because he felt he was himself greatly to blame in not making himself acquainted with the regulations.

This mischance was really the best thing that could have happened, and the turning point of his career. He determined to leave painting the figure for a little time, and resolved to study landscapes from nature. Almost his first trial convinced him that his *forte* was landscape and not historical painting. He saw nature with new eyes, as it were; for his study of the figure had taught him much in seeking for colour, and he found revealed to himself fresh and brilliant ideas in his search for tones and half-tones. Daubigny did not hesitate, but almost there and then settled to abandon the figure and take to landscape-painting entirely.

His first landscapes were painted near the house of his old nurse at the Isle-Adam, Valmondois, where he had a second home. The old lady welcomed him always, and more than one famous picture represents *La Maison de la Mère Bazot,* a modest cottage in a fertile French vale. Besides his *St. Jerome,* he sent to the Salon of 1840 a view of the valley of Oisaus; in 1841, another view in Isère, together with a

frame of six etchings; and in 1847 and the succeeding years of his life he was an almost regular contributor, sending landscapes in oil, with an occasional etching.

But while early in the forties, he searched to find his *métier,* and seemed succeeding with landscape, he had to work very hard for daily bread. His sister's husband, Louis Trimolet, a well-known book-illustrator, died in 1843, and Daubigny had to provide for this family as well as his own. He married about this time, and in 1846 his son Karl was born. Karl, it may be said in passing, afterwards became a painter of similar subjects to his father's, and the son's work has sometimes been mistaken for the elder, and by far the greater, Daubigny.

The best known picture by Daubigny is *Le Printemps,* a large and superb canvas in the Louvre. It is carried much farther than Daubigny usually painted, and shows the artist at his strongest time.

About 1848 Daubigny began to show distinct signs of his genius and for his five delightful landscapes sent to the Salon of that year he was awarded a second-class medal, a notable event for a man of thirty-one. Circumstances began gradually to improve with him, and, when a very acceptable legacy had been left to him he was able to be more independent, painting with the future more in view; and he was also able to take longer journeys from home. On his boat *Le Botin,* built for voyaging on the Oise and Seine, he liked to be called "the Captain," and many a fine picture was painted from it. Very early in the mornings he would start off,

generally alone, until his son became old enough to accompany him, and he would let his boat drift until it brought him to some new position suitable for painting, when he would cast anchor and very soon reproduce the scene on canvas.

Le Botin had everything that was necessary for lengthy journeys, for Daubigny went sometimes from Auvers on the Oise, almost to Rouen, on the Seine. There was always plenty to eat and drink on board, and there was provision for cooking; so that, although he worked hard, he lived well.

In 1860 Daubigny started his country house at Auvers, one of the most charming places within easy access of Paris. There he built a house that was quite a museum of art-treasures, and which was decorated by himself and his brother-artists.

Daubigny's position gradually came to be that of an acknowledged master. In 1853 he was awarded a first-class medal; in 1859 he was made a member of the Legion of Honour, and an officer of the same in 1874; while at the 1867 Exhibition he obtained a first-class medal in the keen competition of the Exposition Universelle.

In 1874 Daubigny began to suffer much from bad health; and from that time up to his death he was never quite free from pain. The closing scene of his life was marked by an incident which showed the deep admiration and devotion he had for Corot. The appreciation was mutual; and Corot had a fine specimen of Daubigny's work in his little collection of pictures. The thoughts of Daubigny, on his death-

bed, turned lovingly towards Corot, and almost his final words were: "Adieu, I am going to see above if friend Corot has found me any *motifs* for landscapes." And so, on the 19th of February, 1878—just four years after Corot —Daubigny died. He was buried at Père Lachaise in presence of a large concourse of friends—artists and writers—and a bust to his memory has since been erected there.

In personal appearance Daubigny was robust and jovial-looking, like the captain he was often jokingly called, with loosely trimmed beard and moustache.

Daubigny was entirely a landscape-painter and etcher. Figures he seldom painted of any size, his greatest works being landscapes, frequently with a river or piece of water in front, well-wooded banks, perhaps an Indian file of geese, ascending a path, and often with a village at the top, showing a church-spire clear against the sky. There is a story told of a poor young man afflicted with consumption, who, coming suddenly before a great work of Daubigny, exclaimed: "Ah! I can breathe better now." The invalid seemed to feel the fresh air blowing on his face, for the artist seemed to have mixed the very atmosphere with his pigments.

LES GLANEUSES *

(J. F. Millet)

JULIA CARTWRIGHT

WHEN Millet finally left Paris to pitch his tent at Barbizon the hardest part of his life was over. Suffering and trouble enough were still in store for him, but he had taken the great step and broken forever with the slavery of conventional art. Henceforth he was free to choose his own subjects and paint in his own way. He had found his true vocation, and fought his way through stress and storm into the light. The clouds of doubt and perplexity which darkened his steps in the past had all vanished, and the path lay clear before him.

I classify Millet's *Les Glaneuses* among the landscapes. In truth, nature here is only a pretext, an opportunity. The entire feeling is concentrated on the three figures which people this scene. But these are female peasants who are performing an act of the life of the fields. Now, it is difficult for me to admit that we can separate the peasant from nature. To some extent the peasant forms an integral part of nature like the tree, or the ox. Assuredly, individuality is more strongly accentuated in him than in the animal or the plant, since he subjects the former and utilises the other. But from the point of view of art, he is found to be simply the highest term of a series which begins with the vegetable to end with him, the peasant; insomuch that he is bound to nature by chains more solid than those of servitude,—I mean by the laws of harmony. Like the oak whose strength he possesses, and the ox which he resembles in slow

Les Glaneuses — Millet

movement, he harmonises with the nature around him, in his costume, his walk, and his attitudes. In the fields where he works or rests, he is magnificent in colour, form and bearing; everywhere else he is grotesque and ugly. On the other hand, townspeople transported into a landscape look ridiculous to me; they worry the eye and make a blot.

On a grey soil that still bristles with the stubble that the sickle has left, three peasant women, dressed in common clothes that fall in heavy folds are bending down to the earth. They are picking up the ears which the sharp eye of the owner has missed. Their hooded heads scarcely leave their coarse features visible. What does that matter? They have no names; they are not such or such a woman; they are a race; they have a social function: they glean when others have harvested. Their apron, gathered up into a basket, is tied by the two ends behind their back. In that they put the stalkless ears that chance has cost into the folds of the furrow. As for those that still have stalks, they hold them bunched in their left hand against their waist. In this manner, ever bent and eagerly toiling, they go forward without raising their head for an instant. The skies might at will roast them with sunlight or drench them with rain; they have no leisure to worry about that; because what they are thus gathering with their hard and red hand is their winter bread. Only, instead of gathering this bread like their masters, in armfuls and in the full field when the grain is standing, they collect the crumbs that fall after the masters have passed. In the distance, while these unfortunates are toiling and moiling, the reapers are joyously piling the sheaves into the waggons and hastening their departure for the village, the houses of which whiten the horizon, where feasting, wine and dancing await them.

This canvas, which reminds us of frightful miseries, is not at all like some of Courbet's pictures, a political harangue or a social thesis; it is a very beautiful and very simple work of art, free of all declamation. The motif is indeed poignant; but, treated as it is here, in the highest style, with breadth, sobriety and frankness, it rises above party passions and reproduces, far from lies and exaggeration, one of those true and grand pages of nature such as we find in Virgil and Homer.—*J. A. Castagnary.*

A group of peasants drinking or quarrelling, a picturesque beggar, or even a pair of humble lovers at a cottage might be tolerated; but no one was so audacious as to attempt the prosaic theme of a labourer at his work.

This Millet was the first to do. Born himself of a long race of yeomen, and familiar with every detail of rustic toil, he was admirably fitted both by nature and education for the task. He saw the dignity of labour and knew by bitter experience the secrets of the poor. And the pathetic side of human life had for him an especial attraction. "The gay side of life," he had said in a letter to Sensier, "never shows itself to me; I know not if it exists, but I have never seen it." Like the great Roman poet whom he loved from his boyhood, he was profoundly conscious of the pathos of human life and the unsatisfied yearnings of the human heart. The sight of the struggling masses of toiling humanity filled him with sympathy; the hardship and monotony of the labourer's daily lot, the patient endurance that comes of long habit, touched his inmost soul. In his eyes this was true humanity and great poetry.

And more than this, he looked on the peasant with the eye not only of the poet, but of the artist. He realised from the first the close relation that exists between the familiar sights of every-day life and the noblest works of art; saw that there might be action as heroic, and beauty as true, in the attitude and gesture of a peasant sowing or a woman gleaning as in the immortal forms of Greek sculpture. That natural instinct for beauty of line, that keen appre-

ciation of form which revealed itself in the boy's charcoal-drawing of the old man bent double with age, led him to note every gesture and movement in the people about him, just as it made him find such keen delight in the drawings of Michelangelo. When, in his struggling Paris days, he proposed to make drawings of reapers at work, "in fine attitudes," his friend shrugged his shoulders and shook his head at this strange suggestion. But in the end this was exactly what Millet did, and the world to-day no longer laughs at the *Sower,* or *Gleaners.* He knew, as few masters have ever known, how to put a whole world of thought into an individual action, how to express the lives and character of bygone generations in a single gesture; and with true poetic insight he makes us realise the deeper meaning that lies hidden below the eternal destiny of the human race, the age-long struggle of man with Nature, which will endure while seed-time and harvest, summer and winter, follow each other upon the face of the earth.

But his choice of peasant-subjects no doubt gave rise to the impression that he was actuated by political motives, and increased the hostile attitude of the fashionable world in the days of the Second Empire. Many years passed by before this unfortunate impression was removed, and in the meantime the painter had to suffer. The Court and the public looked upon him as a dangerous character. The critics spoke of him as a painter who deliberately preferred ugliness, and had no sense of beauty. His admirers remained

limited to a small circle of artists and men of taste, and his pictures would not sell.

In the autumn of 1856 Campredon died, and eighteen of Millet's works, which he had bought at different times, were included in the sale of his collection. On this occasion his friends did their utmost to push Millet's works, and Rousseau especially exerted himself to raise their value. He advertised the sale in all directions, and was an active bidder himself, ill as he could afford to spare the money. But in spite of all his efforts, Millet's works sold for next to nothing. As ill-luck would have it, Millet was at this moment in great need of money, and saw with terror the approach of the end of the year, when his creditors were always busy. No wonder that his letters breathe a sorrowful strain, and that a kind of "settled weariness," as he says, seemed to take possession of his soul. Yet his creative powers did not languish for a moment, and during that melancholy winter he was engaged on one of the noblest and most famous of his pictures—*Les Glaneuses*. The first allusion we find to this great work occurs in a sorrowful letter to Rousseau:

"How much trouble I give you, my poor Rousseau! You are a living instance of the saying that 'kind hearts are condemned to become the victims of others.' All the same I hope you will not think that I am not aware of the endless worry that I give you, but I can not help imposing on your kindness. I seem to be under the spell of an enchantment. Bah! I will stop, for I neither can, nor dare, say what is in my mind on this subject.

"I am working like a slave to get my picture of *The Gleaners* done in time. I really do not know what will be the result of all the trouble that I have taken. There are days when I feel as if this unhappy picture had no meaning. In any case, I mean to devote a quiet month's work to it. If only it does not turn out too disgraceful! . . . Headaches, big and little, have attacked me during the last month with such violence that I have scarcely been able to work for a quarter of an hour at a time. I assure you that both physically and morally I am in a state of collapse. You are right; life is very sad. There are few cities of refuge; and in the end you understand those who sighed after a *place of refreshment, of light and peace.* And you understand, too, why Dante makes some of his personages, in speaking of the days which they spent, on earth, *'The time of my debt.'* Ah, well! let us hold out as long as we can."

When Millet wrote these words, he was in the act of finishing one of the noblest works of modern art—that great picture of *Les Glaneuses,* which now, by the generous request of Madame Pommery, belongs to the Louvre. The fact deserves to be remembered for the consolation of toiling and suffering genius. But to the end of time it will be the same, and the greatest work will be produced under the same burden of sorrow, and at the same heavy cost.

The motive of this picture had long been in Millet's thoughts. A pen-and-ink sketch of a woman stooping to pick up an ear of wheat is to be found in one of his early

note-books. In a second study we have two women gleaning corn in a harvest-field: one walks erect, carrying a sheaf in her arms, the other bends down over her work, and in the background are the loaded waggon and horses, and the farmer and his men stacking the sheaves. A third drawing gives us the three figures of the picture: two women are seen, each holding a sheaf in one hand, and stooping to pick up an ear of corn with the other, while a third and older woman bends slowly, and with evident difficulty to imitate their action. This third figure afterwards underwent many alterations, and was the subject of a variety of different studies. But in the end the right attitude was discovered, the exact gesture caught, and the painter's thought found perfect expression. In point of grandeur and completeness, Millet seldom equalled this picture. That solemn moment, the end of the harvest, has never been as finely represented. In the background we see the cornfield, with its groups of reapers and loaded waggons and horses bringing the sheaves to the ricks, the farmer himself on horseback among his men, and the homestead among the trees. The transparent atmosphere of the summer day, the burning rays of the sun, and the short stalks of yellow stubble are all exactly rendered. And in the foreground are the three gleaners—heroic types of labour fulfilling its task until "the night cometh when no man can work."

Les Glaneuses was first exhibited in the Salon of 1857, and was at once recognised by the majority of artists and

connoisseurs as the finest thing that Millet had yet done. The beauty of the landscape, the rich tones of the colouring, and the pathetic dignity of the figures, made a general and profound impression. Edmond About said its grandeur and serenity moved him as deeply as some great religious painting of old. But, on the other hand, it was fiercely attacked by another section of critics, who, with Saint-Victor at their head, scoffed at the "gigantic and pretentious ugliness of the gleaners," and called them the Parcæ of Poverty. Some journalists saw in these faces the mute appeal of the wretched and miserable; others described the three poor women as dangerous beasts of prey whose angry gestures threatened the very existence of society.

These hostile criticisms annoyed Millet, and hampered the sale of his works. But they did not make him alter his practice or swerve a step out of his path.

"They may do their worst!" he said to his friends. "I have ventured all on this one stake, and have risked my neck, and I do not mean to draw back now. I stand firm. They may call me a painter of ugliness, a detractor of my race, but let no one think they can force me to beautify peasant-types. I would rather say nothing than to express myself feebly. Give me signboards to paint, yards of canvas, if you will, to cover by the piece like a house-painter, and let me work, if need be, as a mason, but at least let me think out my subjects in my own fashion, and finish the work that I have to do in peace."

Sometimes Sensier would urge him to make his peasants

more attractive, and remind him that even village-maidens had pretty faces, and that some labourers were handsome fellows.

"Yes, yes," Millet would reply, not without a touch of impatience, "that is all very fine, but you must remember beauty does not consist merely in the shape or colouring of a face. It lies in the general effect of the form, in suitable and appropriate action. Your pretty peasant-girls are not fit to pick up faggots, to glean under the August sun, or draw water from the well. When I paint a mother, I shall try and make her beautiful, simply by the look which she bends upon her child. Beauty is expression."

After all this controversy, the *Glaneuses* had some difficulty in finding a purchaser. But in the end, M. Binder, a wealthy merchant of L'Isle-Adams, to whom Millet had been introduced by his friend the painter, Jules Dupré, bought the picture for two thousand francs. It changed hands, as our readers will remember, in 1889, when it was bought for three hundred thousand francs by Madame Pommery, and eventually presented by her to the Louvre.

THE GLEANER

(Jules Breton)

MAURICE VACHON

WE might begin with the traditional words of the old tales: "There was once a child" who was very fond of the things and people of his own village, the fields of wheat and poppy, the meadows blossoming with golden buds, and the trees musical with linnets, blackbirds and finches. His happiness consisted in lying down in the long grass that caressed his face and watching for hours at a time the swallows flying over his head, or running along the hedge-rows, startling the sparrows from the bushes. Later, he was deeply moved by the religious festivals and *fêtes champêtres;* the *ducasse* in which girls and boys dance under the elms; Palm Sunday, when the nave of the old church looks like a thicket on the march; the *Fête-Dieu,* which hangs the walls of houses and gardens with white clothes smelling of good washing, stuck with flowers and garlanded with greenery, with choristers scattering rose-leaves and corn-flowers before the Holy Sacrament; the Rogation-days, during which banners are carried through the fields while canticles are sung to implore the Divine blessing on the fruits of the earth. One fine day, a painter from the neighbouring town came to decorate the house; the child, with ineffable delight, felt the awakening of an

artist's vocation; and after that he thought of nothing but crayons, colours and brushes. Soon he tried to recall his rustic visions in charcoal scrawls on barn doors and white walls; he painted boards and panels by using flowers and crushed elder berries.

What then is this country that exercised such a mighty power of seduction and absorption on an artist? Doubtless, some country celebrated for the clemency of its climate and the joy of its sunlight; a country blessed by Heaven that poets have sung of? No; it is an obscure district of Artois' that never was the abode of goddesses, muses and nymphs, nor ever inspired any legend of love and beauty. What does it matter? It is the heart that establishes that mysterious correspondence between living beings and inanimate things that makes their poetry; love is the ray of light that converts into a radiant pearl the drop of water that trembles on the end of a blade of grass on the roadside or in a ditch. Jules Breton, a poet as well as a painter, wrote the following verses on his country:

"J'aime mon vieil Artois' aux plaines infinies
Champs perdus dans l'espace ou s'opposent, mêlés,
Poems de fraîcheur, et fauves harmonies,
Les lins bleus lacs de fleurs, aux verdures brunies,
L'oeillette, blanche écume, à l'océan des blés."

This declaration of love is repeated in almost every page of his work, always with the same emotion and sincerity.

The Gleaner Breton

One day, the painter after a journey to the Land of Sunlight, that Provence that seems to have inherited the skies, the beauty and the women of ancient Greece, re-entered his Artois, his Courrières: "The wheat was ripening," he said, "late poppies were still swinging their white chalices;—here and there, beautiful thistles proudly raised their carmine crowns, or let loose their silky, white hair on the evening breeze; a sky of opal over which a few golden fleecy clouds were sailing was vibrating, enveloping this sea of tawny grain, poppies, clover and sanfoin; the vast circle of the horizon trembled in the depths of the air with its distant steeples, groups of pale poplars and round willows." Then, he cried, his eyes wet with tears: "That is the country I went away from!" When, later, after a stay of considerable length, he left Brittany where his feelings as a painter and a poet were very strong, he felt that they were flying away "like a flock of finches" as soon as he had set foot again on the soil of his Artois; and his heart again trembled "before the good ground sprinkled with lucerne and the tall wheat gently waving in its exquisite odour."

Jules Breton was born May 1st, 1827, at Courrières, the second of four children of a receiver of the Duc de Duras. At the age of ten he was sent to a small boarding school in the neighbourhood, and then to the college of Douai, where he learned drawing, which study rendered the years spent away from home supportable. In 1843, a painter of Ghent named Felix De Vigne having seen his work while on a visit to Courrières, took him away with him

and had him entered in the Royal Academy of that city. Three years later he left to perfect himself as a painter in the Academy of Fine Arts at Antwerp. This stage was of short duration, for Jules Breton fell ill, and had to return to Courrières, where his natal air and care rapidly restored his health. His family decided that he should finish his studies in Paris in the studio of some celebrated master. On the advice of an official of the Louvre, he was placed under Drolling; then he took some lessons from Ary Scheffer and Robert Fleury. Finally he decided to work direct from nature in the open country near Paris, and in the Forest of Fontainebleau, which was already frequented and made famous by a colony of painters. He exhibited for the first time in the Salon of 1849. His contribution was a melodramatic composition whose title—*Misère et Désespoir*—characterises the tendencies inspired by the tragic events of that period of outbreaks. The next year he painted another picture of the same nature.

In 1853, a *Retour des moissonneurs* was his first appearance in the painting of rustic life, which he was never to abandon. During his childhood and youth, Jules Breton had stored up in his brain so many images and visions of that life, that the influence of the Classical and Romantic ideas drawn from the teachings of his masters in Ghent, Antwerp and Paris could be only temporary, and must soon pass away definitely. This picture had been painted in the studio from professional models after a sketch made at Saint-Nom-La-Brétèche, near the Forest of Marly. A

Petite Glaneuse, exhibited the same year at Brussels, was the first composition in which the artist painted from nature a country scene of his Artois, his Courrières. In his souvenirs of *La Vie d'un artiste* he wrote: "One day I made a little reaper pose on a flowery bank by a wheat-field; she bowed her head in the shadow; the bonnet and shoulder being in full sunlight. I painted her with secret joy, for I could not tell you how delighted I was with the harmony of that brown, strong profile against the tawny straw over which lilac convolvulus climbed; of those warm reflections of the ground, and violet ones of the blue sky; of those twigs and flowerets; the whole thing enchanted me." Henceforth, figures of gleaners haunted the imagination of the young artist; he painted them again and again, individually or in a group, in studies from nature which he multiplied in his enthusiasm over the beauties that he discovered every moment in his own country, an inexhaustible source of sensations incessantly renewed, for his eyes and his heart. Shortly afterwards, he painted *Les Glaneuses,* of the Universal Exposition of 1855, which immediately classed him among the great French painters of rural life. This picture was already a superb blossoming of his ideal; he had tenderly caressed the original and picturesque idea of it which had fired his youthful imagination with enthusiasm. He himself has related. "I dreamed of a composition expressing a more complete scene of those poor women, girls and urchins who tumbled among the stubble like flocks of sparrows. Under the full scorching sun, I admired their

moving silhouettes formed of groups more or less bent towards the soil, at the risk of losing the ears they had gathered. Nothing could be more Biblical than this human flock. The sun's rays catch their fluttering rags, bite their necks, gleam on the straw, draw the sombre profiles with a luminous line and streak the tawny brightness of the earth with fugitive shadows in which the blue reflections of the zenith seem to tremble. Before so much fullness and simplicity, I felt I was living again in the days of the patriarchs. And indeed, is it not always just as grand and beautiful? I came away as if out of a bath of light, the resplendence of which still pursued me through the night with dazzling visions." The picture of the Salon of 1857, the *Benediction des blés,* definitely consecrated his youthful renown. Before the public exhibition, he had made a sensation in the world of artists. Gérôme, Corot, Troyon, and others warmly felicitated him on the work. M. de Nieuwerkerke, superintendent of the Beaux-Arts, bought direct from the artist, for five thousand francs, the greatly admired picture which he placed in the Musée du Luxembourg.

The part of Jules Breton's work consecrated to Artois numbers no less than sixty-four pictures. They may be divided into four general series: Work, Repose, *Fêtes Champêtres* and Religious Festivals, which summarise all the manifestations of rustic life selected by the painter as habitual motives for the representation of nature, according to his aesthetic principles; the constant pre-eminence of

the human figure in various effects of light over other beings and things, according to the season and the hour of the day.

Jules Breton belongs to the race of those French artists, like our trees well rooted in our fertile earth, who are produced slowly by our sun but with vigour, and which produce flowers every spring and fruits every autumn. The catalogue of his works since 1845 shows a regular production, without intermission, which amounts to-day to one hundred and ten pictures. And we may say that the whole of this painting has always been the sincere expression of his soul. The painter has never had any other system than his own sentiment, any other impulsion than his own emotion, nor any other course than his own sincerity. An art writer once summed up the manner and genre of Jules Breton as follows: "He listens to his heart, and he paints." And Millet, with whom he has often been compared, has also defined him very picturesquely. At the distribution of the awards of the Universal Exposition of 1867, the Barbizon master and the Courrières master were sitting side by side, talking and recalling the criticisms to which they had been subjected: "We both seek infinite nature," said the former in conclusion; "are we not free to follow the furrow that we love, you the convolvulus in the wheat, and I the rough potatoes?"

RETOUR A LA FERME*

(Constant Troyon)

CHARLES BLANC

TROYON was one of those fortunate artists who have no biography and leave behind them nothing but the best of their soul: their works. His life was spent almost entirely amid fields and woods, obscure and unknown, in a delightful *tête-à-tête* with Nature. Poetry, which others have wandered far to find, in the environs of the Eternal City, in districts thronged with memories and haunted by historic heroes, Troyon found here at his side as he walked along the little road that led to the neighbouring wood, and strolled around the district. He had only two passions: his mother and nature. His mother, more than eighty years of age, suffered the sorrow of surviving him; and as for nature, she, eternally faithless, will grant her favours to other lovers. Nevertheless, she will never find one more devoted or more loving than Troyon.

* The *Retour à la Ferme* was presented to the State by Troyon's mother after his death. On a road, preceded by a barking and jumping dog, emerge from a wood and into the sunlight some sheep, two cows and an ass. On the left is a pond where two other cows are drinking. Four more cows are approaching as if to join those in the road. Back of the pond are other woods and lovely landscape. A more delightful picture of peaceful and opulent farming could not be presented—*D. Cady Eaton, A Handbook of Modern French Painting* (New York, 1909).

Retour à la Ferme — Troyon

More loving indeed, for, in spite of his apparent roughness, in the presence of nature, Troyon was gentle, docile, readily subjugated and easily moved. On seeing him, you might have taken him for a poacher; on hearing him, you would never have suspected that he possessed any qualities beyond a rustic good nature and the instincts of a common person; in reality, he had a nature full of love. Beneath a virile and somewhat rough exterior he concealed a sensibility that he did not reveal either in speech or writing, but which, fortunately, betrays itself in his painting, and which is the secret of the kind of fascination that he exercises upon contemporary youth.

Almost all that he knew, Troyon had learned for himself by his intimate and direct communion with nature. He had no master. He received only his first lessons in drawing and a little advice from M. Riocreux, his godfather, who at his death was the director of the Museum of the Sèvres Manufactory, and who was then a flower-painter attached to that establishment. It was at Sèvres that Troyon was born on the twenty-eighth of August, 1810, and he was brought up in the manufacture of porcelain. M Riocreux who, in consequence of some accident, had to give up painting, was then thinking of founding that beautiful Museum of Ceramics, the formation and honour of which should belong to him, and he took pleasure in encouraging the youthful Constant Troyon who already felt the workings of the instincts and temperament of a future painter.

Troyon's father had employment and lodging in the Sèvres manufactory. He died in 1817, leaving two infant boys, Constant being the younger. The mother of these two children did not lose courage. She contrived to make little pictures by arranging feathers of American birds, real feathers with which she composed motives of painting for pins, brooches, rings, bracelets and other ornaments. Foreigners who visited Sèvres, particularly English and Americans, were delighted with these pins and brooches, and bought them at high prices as objects of art. A happy and charming industry to which we must attribute another painter in our school, a true painter in the full sense of the word, for it was the product of her birds' feathers that enabled Madame Troyon to bring up her two sons.

Living among painters, in a house where the every day talk was of design, colour, form of elegant design, beautiful contours and graceful decoration, the Troyon brothers made painters of themselves, or rather, became painters unconsciously. A very singular thing—for which, doubtless, M. Riocreux is to be thanked—is that these two young people who were to be led so naturally to paint birds, cupids, pretty shepherdesses ribboned *à la Watteau,* and those bouquets that flourish around vases, strayed into quite another path; they took the key to the meadows and set themselves to paint simply after nature. It must be said, for landscape painters, that this is a good method, but only on condition that the beginner does not do without the advice of a master. which advice can lighten the work by teaching

what the Italians call the *arte di vedere,* the art of seeing. This precious assistance was not lacking to Troyon. One day when he had set up his easel on the fringe of a wood near Saint-Cloud, he was approached by a man with the face of an artist and with a portfolio under his arm; it was Camille Roqueplan. Being struck by Troyon's sketch and the truthfulness of its character amid a deluge of petty details, Roqueplan encouraged his young brother in art and made several observations that made him open his eyes. Nothing is more usual than to lose one's head on finding oneself face to face with Nature; the great enchantress possesses this power of intoxicating painters; woe to those who can not love her without remaining masters of their own hearts! She is the Infinite, and we easily lose ourselves in her; she is mysterious; she is obscure; she needs to be penetrated and comprehended; she is silent; she must be understood and taught a language. Till then, Troyon had groped and fumbled; the few words that Roqueplan spoke to him were rays of light. He asked permission to call upon him in Paris; and the acquaintance of an artist so far advanced in the secrets of his art was good luck for his new comrade.

About 1842, Troyon came to settle in Paris in the *Rue dc la Tour d'Auvergne.* It was a period in which shone a splendid school of landscape artists, I should say the finest that ever appeared in the world, if I did not respect the sacred shades of Paul Potter, Van de Velde, Karel Dujardin, Berghem, Hobbema and the sublime Ruisdael. Whilst

Diaz brought from Bas-Bréau and the gorges of Aprémont studies the enchanting colour of which will never be surpassed, whilst Decamps and Marilhat returned from the East with treasures of poetry and sunlight, Jules Cabat, Dupré, Rousseau, Paul Huet, Flers, Français and others, without forgetting Roqueplan and Eugène Isabey, rent the veil which theretofore had hidden from us the graces and simplicities of Nature, the veil with which the majestic genius of Poussin and Claude had first been draped, and in which the false Classics had later been stifled. In the middle of this new group of artists Troyon had burst into view; he had blazed his way and was already a master. He had exhibited lovely pictures several times at the Salon before the public was aware of it. Only a few amateurs took notice, and the painters were not deceived. In the exhibition of 1844, they remarked a work that was thoroughly picturesque; it was a pond, or rather a ditch, the mire being covered with abundant verdure. This ditch was seen through an opening in old woodwork crossing it that formed a frame, and below which the painter had represented one of those masses of humid vegetation in which we hear the frogs croaking. Troyon then worked after Jules Dupré, who himself was inspired by the English landscape painter Constable, for, we must acknowledge, Constable was the first who, casting all mannerisms to the four winds, attacked Nature boldly and at one stroke gained its reality and its prestige.

Soon afterwards a Revolution broke out. The Repub-

lican Government paid me the signal honour of confiding me with the direction of the Beaux-Arts. Troyon had made further progress; he sent for exhibition in the Salon of 1849 some superb landscapes which were bought by the Ministry, among others, if I remember rightly, a large *Bouquet de chênes,* and the *Retour à la Ferme.* As at that time the landscape artists were the glory of our school, I determined to ask for the Cross of the Legion of Honour for Troyon, but it was necessary to ask for it first for Jules Dupré, who was Troyon's senior, and who, without having had him for a pupil, was to some extent his master. When the time came to make the awards, the Minister left Troyon's name on the list, after Jules Dupré, with Séchan, Muller and Raffet.

From that day, Troyon's pictures, which were selling at a hundred *écus,* fetched six, eight and ten thousand francs each. The journalists had vainly proclaimed Troyon a superior artist, art dealers and amateurs had no belief in his excellence until they saw him with a red ribbon in his buttonhole. Then the dealers cried him up,—he received the baptism of illustrious auction sales, and everybody declared that he had long recognised Troyon as a wonderful artist. In a few years his fortune was made; a fortune which now (1876) amounts to much more than a million.

Just as Troyon has no biography, so also his pictures have no names and no history. Unlike those of Claude and Poussin, they are not called the *Funeral of Phocion,* the *Coronation of David,* the *Embarkation of Cleopatra*

Orpheus and Eurydice, or *Ruth and Boaz.* They are called the *Great Oak,* the *Forest Depths,* the *Horse Pond,* the *Valley of the Touque,* or the *Heights of Suresnes.* They are the first sights we come across, trees such as we see everywhere, fields, streams and paths through the woods such as we see when we take a walk outside Paris. But what charm he has managed to put into all this! In his works we do not see columns, nor monuments, nor august ruins, nor fabulous gods, nor Daphne. His heroes are rustics driving oxen or a cart, with their feet deep in muddy ways. His nymphs are farmers' wives taking their produce to town, seated on an ass, in simple petticoat and flat shoes, or girls driving their flock of turkeys along the road, unconscious of their rustic beauty and fresh youth. They pass along with such truth that we shall soon lose sight of them as they turn the corner of the road. Troyon's light is generally northern, grey and vaporous; it is seldom brilliant, except when expressing sunset scenes. His sky, of a cloudy blue, is full of flying clouds, and he willingly sacrifices it as a relief for the flocks. He uses it as a background to set off the hide of the dun cow with black stripes, or the bull's red hide spotted with white, or the matted thickness of the fleeces, or the plumage of the ducks waddling in the fields. From the day when he became a painter of animals, Troyon took a place entirely by himself in the school. Although a fine landscape painter, he subordinated the country to the figures he wanted to put into action, the cattle, sheep, plough-horses and hunting dogs. His manner of painting

them is not caressing like that of Van de Velde, nor precise and detailed like that of Paul Potter, nor indicative and seasoned with a spice of humour like that of Berghem; but, rather, is remarkable for a feeling of breath, energy and plenitude, which sometimes recalls the animals of Albert Cuyp in their fat pastures. The great oxen which stretch their necks to drink at the pond, or ruminate with half-closed eyes on the meadow, are grandly seen and solidly constructed; they are strong, slow, heavy and patient. His sheep are rendered with palpable and bleating truth. Contrary to Decamps who always paints animals and men seen from behind, so as to sink them more deeply into the vanvas, Troyon prefers to paint them from in front so as to make them come out better. His incomparable talent consists in expressing the presence of the air, and plunging his figures into a bath of light. His pasty touch, skilfully undecided, breaks the contours and clothes them with atmosphere so that with him we always see the picture, never the piece. That is the triumph of Troyon. Everything that he represents shares in the universal life and the universal nature. What he brings out for us from the depths of the woods is the *impression* of the woods; what he has taken from nature is its strong and penetrating aroma, its essence. By this trait, you recognise what he is in landscape,—a master.

THE DELAWARE VALLEY

(George Inness)

JOHN C. VAN DYKE

EVEN when he was not bothered by many impressions, Inness had difficulty in contenting himself with his work. It was never quite right. There was a certain fine sentiment or feeling that he had about nature and that he wished to express in his picture; but he found that when the sentiment was strong the picture looked weak in the drawing, had no solidity or substance; and when the solidity was put in with exact textures and precise lines, then the sentiment fared badly. Inness knew where the trouble lay. "Details in the picture must be elaborated only enough fully to reproduce the impression. When more is done, the impression is weakened and lost, and we see simply an array of external things which may be very clearly painted and may look very real, but which do not make an artistic painting. The effort and the difficulty of an artist is to combine the two, namely to make the thought clear and to preserve the unity of impression. Meissonier always makes his thought clear; he is most painstaking with details; but he sometimes loses in sentiment; Corot, on the contrary, is to some minds lacking in objective force. He tried for years to get more objective force, but he found that what he gained in that respect he lost in sentiment."

The Delaware Valley — Inness

This is Inness's own statement of the case, and if we apply it we shall understand why many of his later canvases were vague, suggestive, indefinite, often vapoury. He was seeking to give a sentiment or feeling rather than topographical facts. When the canvas looked too weak, he tried to strengthen it here and there by bringing out lines and tones a little sharper, and with the result of making it look hard and cold. After several passings back and forth from strength to weakness, from sentiment to fact, the canvas began to show a kneaded and thumbed appearance. Its freshness was gone and its surface tortured. Inness was hardly ever free from this balancing of motives. It is a plague that bothers all painters, and no doubt many of them would agree with Inness in saying: "If a painter could unite Meissonier's careful reproduction of details with Corot's inspirational power, he would be the very god of art."

But Inness was more allied to Corot than to Meissonier. He never was the "perfect master of the brush" that we have heard him called, though he was an acceptable and often a very satisfactory technician. In his early days there were no art instructors in this country, and he was virtually self-taught. He had some instruction in engraving, and a few lessons from Gignoux in New York, but they amounted to little. In 1851 he went to Italy and spent several years, and there he first saw real pictures. He improved greatly by foreign study; and later on, when he came to know the work of the Fontainebleau-Barbizon men, he found himself

in complete sympathy with it. Rousseau improved his technique, and Corot taught him the law of sacrifice; but he never became what one might call a perfect technician. He was frequently a little lame in drawing, and his pictures were often perplexing in their planes and lights. Nor was he always satisfactory in his textures and surfaces. Colour was undoubtedly his strongest feature. He saw his landscapes as related masses of colour rather than in linear extensions; and as he received the impression so he tried to place it upon canvas, holding the colour patches together with air and illuminating the whole mass by light and shadow.

It was with colour, light and air that Inness scored his greatest successes. Almost all of his pictures will be found to hinge upon these primary features. He was very fond of moisture-laden air, rain effects, clouds clearing after rain, rainbows, mists, vapours, fogs, smokes, hazes—all phases of the atmosphere. In the same way he fancied dawns, dusks, twilights, moonlights, sunbursts, flying shadows, clouded lights—all phases of illumination. And again he loved sunset colours, cloud colours, sky colours, autumn tints, winter blues, spring greys, summer greens—all phases of colour. And these not for themselves alone but for the impression or effect that they produced. Did he paint a moonlight, it was with a great spread of silvery radiance, with a hushed effect, a still air, and the mystery of things half seen; did he paint an early spring morning, it was with vapour rising from the ground, dampness in the air,

voyaging clouds and a warming blue in the sky; was it an Indian summer afternoon, there was a drowsy hum of Nature lost in dreamland, and with the ineffable regret of things passing away. His *Rainy Day, Montclair,* has the bend and droop of foliage heavy with rain, the sense of saturation in earth and air, the suggestion of the very smell of rain; his *Delaware Water Gap* shows the drive of a storm down the valley, with the sweep of the wind felt in the clouds, the trees and the water; his *Niagara* is not topographical in any sense but rather an impression of the clouds of mist and vapour boiling up from the great cauldron, and stuck into colour-splendour by the sunlight.

Every feature of landscape had its peculiar sentiment for Inness. He said so often enough, and with no uncertain voice. Here is one of his utterances about it: "Rivers, streams, the rippling brook, the hillside, the sky, clouds—all things that we see—can convey that sentiment if we are in the love of God and the desire of truth. Some persons suppose that landscape has no power of conveying human sentiment. But this is a great mistake. The civilised landscape peculiarly can; and therefore I love it more and think it more worthy of reproduction than that which is savage and untamed. It is more significant."

That last passage about the "civilised landscape" is well worth noting, because this was exactly the landscape that Inness painted. His subjects are related to human life, and possibly our interest in his pictures is due to the fact that he shows thoughts, emotions and sensations comprehensible

of humanity. He tells things that every one may have thought but no one before him so well expressed. In other words, he brings our own familiar landscape home to us with truth and beauty. This, it may be presumed, is the function of the poet and painter in any land. It was the quality that made Dante and Goethe great, and may account for the fame of Hobbema, Constable, Daubigny—yes, and Inness. He was no follower of tradition in this. What he had to say was distinctly personal; and even his technique was largely of his own invention. When he was young there were traditions of the Hudson River School in the air. The "mappy" landscapes of Cole and F. E. Church, with their crude colour and theatrical composition, held the place of honour. Inness may have been overawed by their size at first, but he soon discovered their emptiness. They had no basis in nature, they were not the landscapes we see and know. The *Heart of the Andes* and *The Course of Empire* were only the names for studio fabrications. The truly poetic landscape lay nearer home. Inness all his life painted it from his studio window or from his dooryard. This was what he called the "civilised landscape," the *paysage intime,* the familiar landscape,—the one we all see and know because it has always been before us. Perhaps its very nearness has blinded us to its beauty.

The love for the familiar landscape was with Inness from his boyhood. To be sure, there was a period when he coquetted with the Classic. When in Italy he saw much of Claude, Poussin and Salvator Rosa; but it is difficult to see

any trace of them in his pictures. He was, possibly, impressed, but he did not wish to follow. In 1854, when he first saw the Fontainebleau-Barbizon pictures, he was decidedly enthusiastic. Millet he thought a demi-god, Daubigny and Rousseau were the perfect recorders of the impression, and Corot he believed the epitome of fine sentiment. How did it happen that Inness was so taken with these French painters? Because they were painters of the *paysage intime;* they had done in France just what he had sought to do in America; they had abandoned the grandiloquent Classic landscape and put in its place the familiar landscape of Fontainebleau Forest and the plain of Barbizon. Naturally enough there was affinity between the American and the Frenchmen. They were striving for similar results. Had Inness been born in France, no doubt he would have been a member of the Rousseau-Dupré group.

But the point is worth emphasising that he did not belong to that group, that he did not follow them or copy them in any way. The aim was a common one, in that they all opposed the spectacular landscape in favour of "the civilised landscape"; but Inness, for his part, did not work after the French formulas. His manner was not that of Rousseau or Corot or Daubigny, but of Inness. The theme, the work and the worker were all original, all of the soil, and all sufficient unto the designed purpose.

We are now, perhaps, in a position to answer that oft-asked question—"What does Inness stand for in American art?" The answers to it have been many and various.

Some painters, perhaps, think him great because he composed or handled in a certain way, or used certain colours or canvases or brushes; others may think he holds high rank because they have heard him called "the master," and fancy he was an exceptionally fine technician; but possibly those who come hereafter may think of him as a leader, the one man who painted and established the *paysage intime,* the familiar landscape, here in America. This was the supreme service that Rousseau, Dupré and Daubigny did for France and French landscape. And as they are ranked there as the discoverers of Fontainebleau and a new world in landscape, so Inness must be ranked here as the discoverer of the American meadow and woodland—a new realm of beauty. It is possibly his most lasting title to fame.

And, in flat contradiction of theories about the cosmopolitan quality of modern art, all the Fontainebleau men were really provincial in what they produced. Corot painted Ville d'Avray, Rousseau and Diaz did Fontainebleau, and Daubigny the Seine and the Marne. None of their work will stand for the south or east of France, none of it will travel beyond France. It is localised about Paris. Just so with the work of Inness. It is emphatically American but limited to the North Atlantic States. The moods and appearances of nature which he portrayed are peculiar to the region lying east of the Alleghanies. In his pictures the light and colouring, the forms and drifts of clouds, the appearances of air, mists, hazes, the trees and hills, the swamps and meadows, may be recognised as belonging to

New Jersey, or New York, or New England; but none of them belong to Minnesota, or Louisiana, or California. He pictured the American landscape more completely, perhaps, than any other painter before or since his time; but his *paysage intime* is, nevertheless, limited as regards its range of subject.

Nor would we have it otherwise. All the masters of art have been provincial so far as subject goes. Titian and Velasquez, Homer and Boccaccio, Burns and Wordsworth, never cared to go beyond their own bailiwicks for material. And Inness—though he may not rank with those just mentioned—found all the material he needed within fifty miles of New York. It was the original discovery of this material, his point of view regarding it, what he did with it, and what he made us see in it, that gives him high rank in the history of American art.

BEATA BEATRIX

(*D. G. Rossetti*)

F. G. STEPHENS

THE picture now before us is one of the masterpieces of the leading member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and was produced in the prime of its powers, imaginative as well as technical. It is among the few examples of Rossetti's art fit to be compared with the *Beloved,* that gem of Mr. George Rae's collection, and in some respects it is even more distinctly than that superb achievement a full and true reflection of the artist's idiosyncrasy of the higher order. The mysticism and mystery of *Beata Beatrix* are due to that which was, so to say, the innermost Rossetti, or Rossetti of Rossetti. The spirit of Dante never found in art or otherwise an apter or more subtle expression than this wonderful vision of that border-realm which lies between life and death.

If the subject itself taxed the painter and his art, my humble office of endeavouring to illustrate it in words is, whether as concerns the means at hand or the fitness of the writer, commensurately unpromising and difficult. In such a case the critic is even more unfavourably placed than the engraver, who, while his original possesses the charm of colour, must needs dispense with that magical element, although, as in this instance, above most others, the sentiment

Beata Beatrix Rossetti

of the picture finds utterance in that which may be called the poetry of its colouration, and the chromatic scheme of the work is not only in harmony with the pathos of the whole, but an essential portion of the design, and, as such, was with the utmost solicitude and insight developed by the poet-painter.

As described in the *Vita Nuova,* that most transcendental of the poet's creations, the Beatrice of Dante's imagination sits in a balcony of her father's palace in Florence. We are in the chamber from which it opens, and the beautiful and spiritual damsel's form is half lost against the outer light, half merged in the inner shadows of the place. She is herself a vision, while—her corporeal eyes losing power of outward speculation—the heavenly visions of the New Life are revealed to the eyes of her spirit. The open window gives a view of the Arno, its bridge and the towers and palaces of that city in which Dante and Beatrice spent their lives side by side, so to say, until that fatal ninth of June, 1290, when she died, and, as the poet told us, "the whole city came to be, as it were, widowed and despoiled of all dignity"; or, as the appropriate motto on the frame in the National Gallery has it, being Dante's own verse, uttered when her death was announced to him, and borrowed from *Jeremiah: "Quomodo sedet sola civitas."* *

* Or at length:

"How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people!
How is she become as a widow, she that was great among the nations!"—*Lamentations, I., 1.*

The outer light which is that of evening when dun vapours prevail, falls in a still brilliant though subdued flood upon the surface of the river, and gives to it a lustre at once warm and silvery, dashed by reflections, whether dim or luminous, of the bridge and other buildings on the banks, and thrown back towards us. Opposed to this sheen the head of Beatrix is so placed that the light shines among the outer threads of her dark auburn hair, and thus produces the effect of a halo, radiant against the vapours of the twilight distance and diffused in the nearer space, while the face itself is, to our sight, merged in the dimness caused by our looking at the splendour of the river. Accordingly, the figure appears partly outlined against the lustre, partly lost in the half-gloom of the chamber. It is thus visible in what may be called a twilight of brilliance and a twilight of shadow. This contrasting harmony has been, with ineffable subtlety and care, developed by the painter, and it enhances the spiritual abstruseness of his design. The true inspiration of his theme required that the figure of Beatrix, being an inmate of that border-realm which divides life from death, should appear occult, and with nothing defined—neither form, nor colour, nor substance, nor shadow, nor light direct, nor positive elements of any sort to affirm that she has passed the bourne from which no traveller returns or lingers in our midst.

Her form is merged, not lost, in that shadowy space which, in Butler's noble phrase, is "of brightness made." Thus Rossetti happily showed that his subject was a mystery,

yet not without life of this world, nor all unreal. A woman of exceeding beauty and holiness, his Beatrix is in a rapture of approaching death, absorbed in a painless ecstasy, having knowledge of the world to come ere her spirit quits its mortal house, so that while her features attest mortality, the fair mansion is not void of life. Rossetti made her drooping eyelids veil unseeing eyes, while her parted lips and slowly-lifted nostrils bespeak a failing vitality. Thus his intention is manifest, while his genius leads us into that recondite region where art passes beyond the reach of words and ordered phrases; touches, in truth, upon the very boundary of pictorial representation and factful resemblance; and affirms its power to deal with the subtlest purposes and visions so abstruse that poets, even while addressing poets, rarely describe them, and painters, although appealing to painters as poetical as themselves have still more rarely ventured to deal with them. That this is an allegory expressing itself without those conventions which are the currency of symbolical language, and thus shows Rosssetti venturing in a new poetic sphere, is a new cause for our admiration.

As to the picture and its spectators, it is obvious that we remain on the mundane side of things, while Beatrix in a swoon passes into the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and the Florence Rossetti painted is the Heavenly City of the future. Rapt thus, her features look pale in the half gloom, half light, and her hands, which erst clasped each other in her lap, have fallen apart to lie supine because their task is almost done, and this is celestial light which glances on

them. A dove, a heavenly messenger, of deep rose-coloured and glowing plumage, and, like the bird of the Annunciation, crowned with an aureole, poises on downward wings at her knee and bears to Beatrix's hands a white poppy, *i. e.*, the mystical flower in which Rossetti meant to combine the emblems of death and chastity. He gave to the flower a dark heart to indicate deathful mystery, and to its pallid leaves imparted that pure whiteness which expresses the stainless life of the lady who, although not dying, is about to die.

Her face is in some respects a likeness of the painter's wife, who passed away some years before he designed this picture. It is obviously, however, not intended as a portrait of that lady, but it may well be called a spiritual translation, inspiring features which had but a general resemblance to those of the *Beata Beatrix* who is before us. Her dress consists of a green outer garment, loosely fitting above a closer under-robe of purple, the colours of hope and sorrow as well as of life and death. They likewise resemble the red and green, or red and blue of the Virgin, symbolical hues, the significance of which all the world has recognised. The sundial on the parapet of the balcony behind the figure, from whose gnomon the celestial brightness projects a shadow, indicates upon the numeral of the hour (the mystical nine the poet has told us of) that the time of Beatrix has nearly, if not quite, come. In the half-gloom behind the swooning lady we see Dante, with book in hand and in "scholarly gown," exactly as when he met

the living Beatrix in the porch of that famous church of Florence which he could never afterwards forget. Exactly as the living poet turned to gaze on his mistress as she passed on her way, so he now turns and as attentively regards the figure of radiant Love, the ideal Eros of his exalted vision, who, holding in one hand a flaming heart, passes on the other side of the picture heavenwards, and seems to sign to Dante that he should follow in that path. This vermilion-clad genius is, of course, the *eidolon,* or spiritual Beatrix, the celestial Love whose earthly image was the Beatrix the poet made immortal in immortal verse, and met and knew—it matters not whether much or little—in Florence street upon that unforgotten day the very record of which is to Dante's lovers as the echo of a rapturous sigh.

Rossetti, writing to a friend, thus describes his intention in this picture:—"It illustrates the *Vita Nuova,* embodying symbolically the death of Beatrice as treated in that work. The picture is not intended at all to represent death, but to render it under the semblance of a trance, in which Beatrice seated in a balcony overlooking the city, is suddenly rapt from earth to heaven. You will remember how Dante dwells upon the desolation of the city in connection with the incidents of her death, and for this reason I have introduced it as my background, and made the figures of Dante and Love passing through the streets, and gazing ominously on one another, conscious of the event; while the bird, messenger of death, drops the poppy between the hands of Beatrice. She, through shut lids, as expressed in the

last words of the *Vita Nuova*,—"*Quella beata Beatrice che gloriosamente mira nella faccia di colui qui est per omnia saecula benedictus.*"

Nearly all the frames of Rossetti's pictures were designed by himself, not only for beauty's sake, but to convey spiritual allusions to the subjects they enclosed. In this case he spent extraordinary pains on the design, which includes, below the painting, the motto, "*Quomodo sedet sola civitas*," as before quoted, and the fatal date, "June 9, 1290." On each side of the frame is an emblematic circle enclosing celestial spaces charged with clouds, stars, and the greater luminaries, and severally appropriate to the theme of the picture.

This important work was begun in 1863, and carried on at intervals for more than two years. In August, 1866, it was, as the artist's brother has told us, sold to the Hon. William Cowper-Temple, afterwards Lord Mount-Temple. There are, at least, besides a drawing in crayons, two versions, not exactly replicas of it; but neither of them is so fine as that now in question. These are in oil. There is a repetition, if not two, in water-colours. After the death of Lord Mount-Temple, his widow, partly in regard, it is said, to his wish, most generously, as a memorial of that warm and sympathetic admirer of the artist, gave this, the finest example, to the National Gallery.

THE HUGUENOT

(*Sir John Everett Millais*)

JOHN GUILLE MILLAIS

OPHELIA and *The Huguenot,* both of which Millais painted during the autumn and winter of 1851, are so familiar in every English home that I need not attempt to describe them here.

Near Kingston, and close to the home of his friends the Lemprières, is a sweet little river called the Ewell, which flows into the Thames. Here, under some willows by the side of a hay-field, the artist found a spot that was in every way suitable for the background of his picture in the month of July, when the river flowers and water-weeds were in full bloom. Having selected his site, the next thing was to obtain lodgings within easy distance and these he secured in a cottage near Kingston, with his friend Holman Hunt as a companion. They were not there very long, however, for presently came into the neighbourhood two other members of the Pre-Raphaelite fraternity, bent on working together; and, uniting with them, the two moved into Worcester Park Farm, where an old garden wall happily served as a background for the *Huguenot* * at which Millais could now work alternately with the *Ophelia.*

* In a letter addressed to Mrs. Combe under date of November 22, 1851, Millais gives the following indication of the famous picture:

"It is a scene supposed to take place (as doubtless it did) on

After finishing the background for *Ophelia,* he began making sketches of a pair of lovers whispering by a wall, and having announced his intention of utilising them in a picture, he at once commenced painting the background, merely leaving spaces for the figures. Both he and Hunt discussed together every picture which either of them had in contemplation; and discoursing on the new subject one evening in September, Millais showed his pencil drawings to Hunt, who strongly objected to his choice, saying that a simple pair of lovers without any powerful story, dramatic or historical, attached to the meeting, was not sufficiently important. It was hackneyed and wanting in general interest. "Besides," he quietly added, "it has always struck me as being the lovers' own private affair, and I feel as if I were intruding on so delicate an occasion by even looking at the picture. I protest against that kind of Art." Millais, however, was unconvinced, and stuck to his point, saying the subject would do quite well; at any rate, he should go on working at "his wall."

the eve of the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day. I shall have two lovers in the act of parting, the woman a Papist and the man a Protestant. The badge worn to distinguish the former from the latter was a white scarf on the left arm. Many were base enough to escape murder by wearing it. The girl will be endeavouring to tie the handkerchief round the man's arm so as to save him; but he, holding his faith above his greatest worldly love, will be softly preventing her. I am in high spirits about the subject *as it is entirely my own,* and I think contains the highest moral. It will be very quiet, and but slightly suggest the horror of a massacre. The figures will be talking against a secret-looking garden wall, which I have painted here."

The Huguenot Millais

In the evening Hunt showed him some rough sketches he had been making, some of them being the first ideas for his famous picture *The Light of the World.*

Millais was delighted with the subject, and looking at some other loose sheets on which sketches had been made, asked what they were for.

"Well," replied Hunt, producing a drawing, "you will see now what I mean with regard to the lack of interest in a picture that tells only of the meeting or parting of two lovers. This incident is supposed to have taken place during the Wars of the Roses. The lady, belonging to the Red Roses, is within her castle; the lover, from the opposite camp, has scaled the walls, and is persuading her to fly with him. She is to be represented as hesitating between love and duty. You have then got an interesting subject, and I would paint it with an evening sky as a background."

"Oh!" exclaimed Millais, delighted, "that's the very thing for me! I have got the wall already painted, and need only put in the figures."

"But," said Hunt, "this is a castle wall. Your background won't do."

"That doesn't matter," replied Millais. "I shall make one of the lovers belonging to the Red and the other to the White Rose faction; or one must be a supporter of King Charles and the other a Puritan."

After much discussion, Millais suddenly remembered the opera of *The Huguenots,* and bethought him that a most romantic scene could be made from the parting of the two

lovers. He immediately began to make small sketches for the grouping of the figures and wrote to his mother to go at once to the British Museum to look up the costumes.

Probably more sketches were made for this picture and for the *Black Brunswicker* than for any others of his works. I have now a number of them in my possession, and there must have been many more. They show that his first idea was to place other figures in the picture—two priests holding up the crucifix to the Huguenot, whose sweetheart likewise adds her persuasions. Again, other drawings show a priest on either side of the lovers, holding up one of the great candles of the Roman Catholic Church, and the Protestant waving them back with a gesture of disapproval. These ideas, however, were happily discarded—probably as savouring too much of the wholly obvious—and the artist wisely trusted to the simplicity of the pathos which marked the character of his final decision.

The *Huguenot* was exhibited with the following title and quotation in the catalogue: "A Huguenot, on St. Bartholomew's Day, refusing to shield himself from danger by wearing the Roman Catholic badge. (See *The Protestant Reformation in France,* vol. ii.) When the clock of the Palais de Justice shall sound upon the great bell at daybreak, then each good Catholic must bind a strip of white linen round his arm and place a fair white cross in his cap." (The Order of the Duc de Guise.)

Mr. Stephens says: "When *A Huguenot* was exhibited at the Royal Academy, crowds stood before it all day long.

Men lingered there for hours and went away but to return. It had clothed the old feelings of men in a new garment, and its pathos found almost universal acceptance. This was the picture which brought Millais to the height of his reputation. Nevertheless, even *A Huguenot* did not silence all challengers. There were critics who said that the man's arm could not reach so far round the lady's neck, and there were others, knowing little of the South, who carped at the presence of nasturtiums in August. It was on the whole, however, admitted that the artist had at last conquered the public, and must henceforth educate them."

The picture is said to have been painted under a commission from a Mr. White (a dealer) for £150; but, as a fact, Millais received £250 for it, which was paid to him in instalments, and in course of time the buyer gave him £50 more, because he had profited much by the sale of the engraving. The dealers, no doubt, made immense sums out of the copyrights alone of *The Huguenot, The Black Brunswicker* and *The Order of Release;* while, as to *The Huguenot* at least—the poor artist had to wait many months for his money and to listen meanwhile to a chorus of fault-finding from the pens of carping scribblers, whose criticism, as is now patent to all the world, proved only their ignorance of the subject on which they were writing. In turn, every detail of the picture was objected to on one score or another, even the lady herself being remarked upon as "very plain." No paper except *Punch* and the *Spectator* [William Rossetti] showed the slightest glimmering of compre-

hension as to its pathos and beauty, or foresaw the hold that it eventually obtained on the heart of the people. But Tom Taylor, the Art critic of *Punch* at that time, had something more than an inkling of this, as may be seen in his boldly expressed critique in *Punch,* vol. i. of 1852, pp. 216, 217.

The women in *Ophelia* and *The Huguenot* were essentially characteristic of Millais's art, showing his ideal of womankind as gentle, lovable creatures; and whatever Art critics may say to the contrary, this aim—the portrayal of woman at her best—is one distinctly of our own national school. As Millais himself once said: "It is only since Watteau and Gainsborough that woman has won her right place in Art. The Dutch had no love for women, and the Italians were as bad. The women's pictures by Titian, Raphael, Rembrandt, Van Dyck and Velasquez are magnificent as works of Art; but who would care to kiss such women? Watteau, Gainsborough and Reynolds were needed to show us how to do justice to woman and to reflect her sweetness."

A sweeping statement like this is, of course, open to exceptions—there are many notable examples in both French aud Italian Art in which woman received her due—but in the main it is undoubtedly true.

The Huguenot was the first of a series of four pictures embracing *The Proscribed Royalist, The Order of Release* and *The Black Brunswicker,* each of which represents a more or less unfinished story of unselfish love, in which the sweetness of woman shines conspicuous.

The figure of the Huguenot was painted for the most part

from Mr. Arthur (now General) Lemprière—an old friend of the family—and afterwards completed with the aid of a model.

Of his sittings to Millais during 1853, Major-General Lemprière kindly sends me the following: "It was a short time before I got my commission in the Royal Engineers in the year 1853 (when I was about eighteen years old), that I had the honour of sitting for his famous picture of *The Huguenot*. If I remember right he * was then living with his father and mother in Bloomsbury Square. I used to go up there pretty often, and occasionally stopped there. His father and mother were always most kind.

"After several sittings I remember he was not satisfied with what he had put on the canvas, and he took a knife and scraped my head out of the picture, and did it all again. He always talked in the most cheery way all the time he was painting, and made it impossible for one to feel dull or tired. I little thought what an honour was being conferred on me, and at the time did not appreciate it, as I have always since.

"I remember, however, so well his kindness in giving me, for having sat, a canary bird and cage, and also a water-colour drawing from his portfolio (*Attack on Kenilworth Castle*), which, with several others of his early sketches which I have, were exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts after his death.

"I was abroad, off and on, for some thirty years after I got my commission, and almost lost sight of my dear old

* Millais.

friend. He, in the meantime, had risen so high in his profession that I felt almost afraid of calling on him. One morning, however, being near Palace Gate, I plucked up courage, and went to the house and gave my card to the butler, and asked him to take it in to Sir John, which he did; and you can imagine my delight when Sir John almost immediately came out of his studio in his shirt-sleeves, straight to the front door and greeted me most heartily.

"I was most deeply touched, about a fortnight before he died, at his asking to see me, and when I went to his bedside, at his putting his arms round my neck and kissing me."

A lovely woman (Miss Ryan) sat for the lady in *The Huguenot,* Mrs. George Hodgkinson, the artist's cousin, taking her place upon occasion as a model for the left arm of the figure. Alas for Miss Ryan! her beauty proved a fatal gift: she married an ostler, and her later history is a sad one. My father was always reluctant to speak of it, feeling perhaps that the publicity he had given to her beauty might in some measure have helped (as the saying is) to turn her head.

The picture was the first of many engraved by his old friend Mr. T. O. Barlow, R. A., and exceedingly well it was done. It eventually became the property of Mr. Miller, of Preston, and now belongs to his son.

THE SHADOW OF DEATH

(*William Holman Hunt*)

F. W. FARRAR

IN *The Shadow of Death,* exhibited in 1874, Mr. Hunt has again painted a great idea, and has carried out a step farther his noble purpose of illustrating by Art the history of Christianity amid all its actual surroundings, so far as they can be recalled or reproduced. It is one of the pictures—they are not numerous—in which Art has tried to answer the question of the unspiritual Nazarenes—"Is not this the carpenter?"

So far as I know there has not been one other attempt in Art amid the countless pictures which were devoted during the Middle Ages—and indeed downwards from the days of the Catacombs—to illustrations of the Gospels, in which it has attempted to paint Jesus as a young man exercising the humble trade in the village of Nazareth, by which he glorified labour for all time. Mr. Millais in modern times, and in the Middle Ages, Albrecht Dürer and others, have painted Christ as a child in the shop of the carpenter—but Mr. Holman Hunt alone has had the strong simple faith which led him to choose as a subject "the Lord of Time and all the Worlds" working for his daily bread in the occupation of a Galilean artisan.

Mr. Hunt went to the East in 1869 to labour at this pic-

ture, but he was hindered by many sad and untoward circumstances, and it was not ready for exhibition till 1874. It was purchased by Messrs. Agnew and by them published and some years later they gave it to the Manchester Art Gallery, of which it now forms one of the most precious possessions.

Any commonplace painter might have rendered the scene, somehow, and have produced in six months a picture of the ordinary superficial kind. This was not the method of Mr. Hunt. He studied every detail, every accessory on the spot. He went to Bethlehem to examine types of face, because it is said that there the inhabitants recall in some features the traditional beauty of the House of David. He painted the interiors of carpenters' shops both at Nazareth and at Bethlehem. On the sill of the window lie two emblematical pomegranates and a roll of the Law. Other rolls are seen in the cupboard below. Under the winch is a water vessel of glazed green pottery, with aromatic shrubs thrust into the orifice to keep the water cool. The landscape, seen through open windows, is not an imaginary or European landscape, but one painted from the house-roof, as is actually seen from the windows of the provincial village in which Christ spent the thirty years of His divine and sinless obscurity. Even the carpenters' tools—the drill, auger, plumb-line, mandrils, half-square, etc., are such as are still daily used in the changeless East, and the saw is one with backward serrature, like those used in ancient Egypt and modern Palestine for pulling, not pushing. And all

The Shadow of Death Holman Hunt

these details were painted on the spot, and as far as the view is concerned, were often delayed for weeks at a time by winds and mists and rain-storms and bad weather.

The accessories, however, are only the merest framework of the central thought. Mr. Hunt has endeavoured to set before us Jesus in His humanity, Jesus who was very Man as well as very God, Jesus as He lived unknown, unnoticed, a poor and humble labourer in the common lot of the vast majority of the human race, glorifying life simply as life, labour simply as labour. Shakespeare makes complaint that—

> "Not a man for being simply man
> Hath any honour; but honour for those honours
> Which are without him, as grace, riches, favour,
> Prizes of accident as oft as merit."

It was the consummate love of Christ which caused Him —as we are told in the text quoted as the motto of the picture—"to make Himself of no reputation, and take upon Him the form of a servant, and be made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." He came, not to glorify wealth, or rank, or power, but to glorify the humanity in which He tabernacled, dwelling "in a tent like ours and of the same material."

And therefore Mr. Hunt has not painted a being irradiated here, with aureoles and nimbus, but Christ in the valley of the shadow of that earthly humiliation which was to Him

a mountain-top of eternal glory, because entering therein by His own and His Father's will, and out of an unfathomable love, He "learnt obedience by the things which He suffered." The picture then is one of "the Man Jesus," who, "being in the form of God, yet thought not equality with God a thing at which to grasp."

He has been toiling for long hours at the manual labour which He exalted and now the evening has come. He is only girt with the cincture which He wore in the necessities of labouring, like men, with the sweat of His brow. He has left the saw in the plank, and the shavings on the floor, and has risen to uplift His arms in the attitude of prayer, as though to say the *Shema* or other evening prayer of the Jews. His eyes are turned heavenwards, His lips are open in supplication.

Mary is kneeling at His right, contrasting, perhaps, the humble realities of the present with the splendid omens of the Nativity, and pondering in her heart all that she has seen and known. She is fondly opening the gleaming, pearly coffer which contains the gifts of gold, and frankincense and myrrh, brought to her Divine Child when—

> "Lo, startled chiefs Assyrian odours bring,
> And bending Magi seek their infant King."

She is handling the golden crown of Gaspar, the green enamel incense-burner of Melchior, the golden bowls for holding the frankincense and myrrh brought by Balthasar. But suddenly looking up, she has caught sight of a shadow on the wall and it has transfixed her with awe and terrible

forebodings. If ever surprise and alarm have been indicated by the mere gesture and attitude of a kneeling figure which has its back turned to the spectators, it is here.

For what she sees on the wall is the Shadow of Death, and the shadow of death by crucifixion.

On the wall behind Jesus, the rack and tools are so arranged as to give the semblance of a cross, and on this cross is thrown this shadow with the arms outstretched. It is at this boding, ominous shadow of a crucified man that she gazes with a start. Does she not know that a sword shall pierce through her own soul also?

In this picture, then, we have an epitome of the life of Jesus. The gifts of the Magi recall His infancy; the carpenter's shop, His youth and manhood; the shadow, His awful sacrifice. The clouds of Golgotha throw their darkness and their sunset-crimson on the golden mists of Bethlehem and the holy innocence of Nazareth. The cry of Gethsemane mingles with the angel carols.

Probably, however, it was not this deep and far-reaching symbolism which made the picture so popular among the hard-working men of Lancashire and Yorkshire when it was exhibited in the north. They saved and paid up their weekly pence to purchase engravings of it, because here the Lord of Glory was presented to them as a friend who had "lived in huts where poor men lie." They saw in the painting the ennoblement of honest labour. Most true it is of this picture, and others with which Mr. Hunt has enriched our age, that, since the days of art began, "no pictures ever cost so much to their painters."

THE MIRROR OF VENUS

(Sir Edward Burne-Jones)

MALCOLM BELL

EDWARD BURNE-JONES was born in Birmingham on the 28th of August, 1833, of a Welsh family, in no way especially distinguished, as far as can be ascertained. His great-grandfather, which is the furthest generation to which it can be traced back, is known to have been a schoolmaster at Hanbury, but his first names have been already forgotten. His only son, Edward Bevin Jones, married Edith Alvin, and had issue, a daughter Ketura and a son Edward Richard Jones, who married Elizabeth Coley, and also had two children, a daughter Edith, and the son whose name, consolidated by a hyphen into Burne-Jones, is known throughout the civilised world.

There is no evidence to be discovered that his extraordinary genius descended to him, even indirectly, from any of his forbears. His strong artistic bent would seem to be an altogether spontaneous growth, a notable one in any case, but in this one the more so as it did not burst forth until comparatively late in life. His earlier years were void of the slightest impulse towards the objects to which his later life was destined to be so utterly given up.

He went in 1844, when he was just eleven, to the old school founded in 1522 by the King Edward after whose title

The Mirror of Venus — Burne-Jones

it is called. Here he worked diligently at the usual studies and gained an intimate acquaintance with classic literature, together with an unusual passion for it which he nourished throughout his life. When in 1852 he won an exhibition which gave him the means of entering Exeter College, it was with the full intention of taking orders in due course that he went up to Oxford.

To the same college on the same day came up another young man, also of Welsh descent, also intended for the Church, and the two fell into an acquaintanceship, destined speedily to ripen into warmest friendship, which has had an influence quite immeasurable upon the art of the last thirty years, for the young stranger thus encountered was the late William Morris.

There for the first time it was revealed to young Burne-Jones that there existed a strange enchanting world beyond the humdrum of this daily life. The first suspicion of that land of faery came to him when in a small volume of poems by William Allingham, he found a little woodcut, *Elfen Mere,* signed with a curious entwinement of the initials D. G. R. This art, strange and incomprehensible as it had proved to most, found here a chord that thrilled to it in utmost sympathy. A little later and he stood in ecstasy before a more important work by the same master, and bowed himself before him. Mr. Combe, the director at that time of the Clarendon Press, was a profound admirer of the Pre-Raphaelite school and possessed among others, a picture by Rossetti, *Dante's Celebration of Beatrice's Birthday.*

By this he was aroused into an enthusiasm which it were hard to over-estimate. The unknown man with the sweet-sounding foreign name who could conceive and body forth such visions, became for him thenceforth a god-like hero. To paint such pictures, too, would be impossible he felt, but to attempt to express even falteringly the echo that they woke within him seemed all that life was good for. By slow degrees, for all the while he was still working resolutely at his academic studies, the firm conviction grew that these were merely waste of energy, and he and Morris about the same time came to the conclusion that Art and not the Church, was their predestinate field of action. For long he hugged the project to his breast in silence, imparting it to no one save that single friend; but in the end his longing waxed too strong for him, and he resolved to look, at least, upon the hero of his choice.

Towards the end of 1855 it was that this determination came to a head, and he set out for London to act upon it.

In 1856, then, when he was already two years past his majority, an age at which most artists, having submitted themselves to eight or ten years of patient study, are beginning to try their strength in the arena of the public exhibitions, Burne-Jones began to draw with directed effort. As he once observed, to all intents, for the purpose of his life's work, at twenty-five he was fifteen.

Partly owing to this sense of his disabilities, partly to weakness of health at the time, much of his early work consisted of pen-and-ink drawings, carried on with extraor-

dinary minuteness and delicacy of finish, and showing most clearly through their obvious and inevitable imperfections the passionate love of beauty and the exquisite feeling which mark all his work from the beginning.

The sources of inspiration from which he drew many of his subjects are highly interesting as illustrating phases in his development, and in throwing light upon the real origin of that Italianised spirit that many profess to detect in his works. In the earlier days, while he was still under the influence of Rossetti, the *Mort d' Arthur* and certain of the less known Border Ballads strongly affected his imagination, and several of the works of this period are derived from these, as *The Beguilements of Nimue, The Madness of Tristan, Sir Degrevant, Clerk Saunders* and much more recently *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid;* but the author who first captured his fancy and held it the longest was "the well of English undefiled," the poet Chaucer. Chaucer himself borrowed largely from Boccaccio, and still more from the authors of the old French metrical romances, who in their turn took their good where they found it among the Italian poets. His allegories were Chaucerian, with the single exception of the *Mask of Cupid,* which comes from later Italy through Spenser.

The artist shared with Chaucer his passionate love of birds and flowers and lavished them with a tender hand over his work; in especial, like the poet, he delighted in the English flower, the rose. It veils the desolation of his ruins, it heightens the beauty of his gardens, it crowns his Cupid, and

drops in the pathway of his Goddess of Love, and his great work, *The Legend of the Briar Rose,* is quite an apotheosis of the beloved flower. His season, like Chaucer's, was ever May, a time of song and blossoming, but one also, like the poet's, the merriment of which was almost entirely limited to nature, for the spirit of sadness that breathes from Burne-Jones's pictures is Chaucer's.

"A manner ease, medled with grevaunce,"* and "lustie thoughts fulle of great longinge," is the frame of mind of almost all his men and maidens. In the lovely girls clustered around *Venus's Mirror* we find it, and still more in the knight and lady in the *Chant d'Amour* and the pensive princess in *Laus Veneris.* It looks out at us from the eyes of the man and woman in *The Garden of Pan,* and in *Love Among the Ruins,* it weighs like lead upon the persecuted Psyche; even the *Sponsa di Libano* is infected with it. It is the sadness, the bitterness of love that predominates in the merrie month.

His first process in the creation of a picture was the crystallisation of the floating visions in his mind into a design carefully drawn out in chalk or pencil. This was generally modified from time to time, while numerous studies for every detail were carried out in the intervals of other work. In the case of a large picture this was, as a rule, followed by a cartoon painted in water-colours of the same size as the proposed canvas, and finished elaborately from a small coloured sketch. From this the final work was copied, and

* Chaucer's *Cuckoo and Nightingale.*

further studies were made before the painting was begun. Each stage of this was left to dry thoroughly, often for months at a time, before another was commenced, and when the last had been concluded, the whole was left for several years before it was permitted to be varnished, an operation which he always preferred to perform himself with scrupulous care.

Thus, in conclusion, we find in the production of each individual work this same inexhaustible patience, unfailing honesty of purpose, and minute care for the smallest details, which ceaselessly exercised for forty-three years, raised the young artist of 1856, blindly groping in the footsteps of a masterful leader, into the most original and distinctive painter that England has produced, whose fame has spread from among a small circle of staunch admirers out to the furthermost borders of the world of Art.

Sir Edward Burne-Jones's pictures lend themselves less than those of most artists to a division into periods. We can discover in them neither a sudden and radical change of methods, such as, for instance, denoted Sir John Millais's secession from the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, nor a marked transfer of interest from one class of subjects to another, such as may be observed in the works of Sir. L. Alma-Tadema, Sir. E. J. Poynter and others. Having chosen his path he never swerved from it, and the works left unfinished at his death differ only from those of 1856 in the greater perfection of their technical means.

Nor would it be any advantage to divide them into oil and

water-colour pictures, for he made little or no distinction between the two materials; his technical methods of using both were practically identical, and it would be impossible to say in any given case why he had chosen one material rather than the other.

They can, however, be conveniently arranged in classes according to the source of inspiration from which the subject was drawn. These are seven in number. I. Those chiefly dating from the period of Rossetti's greatest influence suggested by Mediæval ballads or legends. II. Those taken from the Classics. III. Those inspired by William Morris's series of poetical stories, *The Earthly Paradise*. IV. Those due to Chaucer. V. Subjects drawn from the Bible. VI. Allegorical subjects; and, VII. Works of pure imagination.

The Mirror of Venus was begun on a small scale in 1867, and a second larger one in 1873, while both were finished in 1877, and are in many ways the most purely beautiful of all his creations. The idea of Venus first introducing femininity to the fascinations of the mirror in the shape of a glassy pool is charming, and the carrying of it out is no less exquisite. The grace of the various girlish figures, sitting, kneeling, or standing about the water, can be fully appreciated, even in a reproduction in black and white, but no words can do justice to the varied harmony of the glowing colour. Especially to be noted in the picture itself are the flowers which he loved and studied so fondly, the broad water-lily leaves, the sheets of blue forget-me-nots, and the white-flowered myrtle beside the tall blue-clad Venus.

Notable also are the different attitudes of the girls, some gazing at themselves in wonder, others absorbed in frank self-admiration, while two alone turn from their own attractions to gaze in awe upon the far greater beauty of the goddess.

To sum up briefly. "What is the secret of the charm that this artist's works exercise upon an ever-increasing multitude of admirers?" It lies firstly in the vividly poetical imaginativeness of his conceptions, and secondly in the wealth of beautiful accessories in which he embodied and enshrined. them. He was not a great painter in the true sense of the word. He never attained to that absolute mastery of the materials of his craft, that positively riotous ease of workmanship that belonged to such painters as Rembrandt and Velasquez, but among artists he takes his place undisputed in the very front rank. His earlier work suffered technically from the delayed commencement and peculiar nature of his art education, and even in his maturer years, though he attained a marvellous accuracy and exquisiteness of touch in drawing, he never reached real breadth or strength of style; but from the first he possessed an infallible sense of beauty of form and colour, a powerful and overwhelming originality, and an unequalled grace and delicacy of fancy.

LOVE AND DEATH

(George Frederick Watts)

JULIA CARTWRIGHT

THERE is probably no living painter who is so widely honoured and revered at the present time as Mr. Watts. Not only in England, but in France and America, in Italy and Germany, this veteran master is held in the same respect. His portrait painted by request hangs in the Uffizi Gallery side by side with those of the great masters of old; one of his finest works occupies a prominent place in the Luxembourg. His pictures have been exhibited at New York and Munich, and have aroused as much enthusiasm in these cities as in our own country. Foreign critics write about his art with acuteness and discernment, and visitors from far-off lands come—as the Queen of Roumania did not long ago—to see the great master whose works have spoken to their hearts with such irresistible power.

Even the school of critics who resent the intrusion of ideas in Art frankly recognise the high pictorial qualities of Mr. Watts's work, and declare that, in spite of these defects, he is a great artist. "I went upstairs," writes a French critic who visited the Art Library at South Kensington Museum for the first time, some years ago, "firmly convinced that symbolic painting was a dead art." What had worked this sudden change of mind in these few moments? The sight of

Love and Death Watts

two pictures by Watts—*Love and Life* and *Love and Death*. Mr. Watts stands on a different plane from other artists. He is not only a painter, but a prophet and a teacher, a preacher who sets forth eternal truths and reasons with the men of his age of righteousness and judgment to come. His aims, and in some ways, his methods of painting are unlike those of other artists. He belongs to no school, and has no followers, but stands apart, like some mountain peak, in lonely grandeur. None of our living painters have been more absolutely self-taught, or have owed less to the example and influence of others. This is the more remarkable because of the wide range of his sympathies, and his readiness to recognise merit in the work of his brother artists.

Like Sir Edward Burne-Jones, the other great imaginative artist of our day, Mr. Watts is of Welsh origin, and inherits the mystic poetry of his Celtic ancestors. His father came from Hereford to London early in this century, and was a man of scientific tastes and considerable inventive faculty, who struggled, not always successfully, to express his ideas in this direction. The date of the painter's birth, February 23d, 1817, is recorded on the fly-leaf of an old Queen Anne prayer-book, bound in richly tooled vellum, and adorned with quaint plates, which he often copied in his early years. As soon as he could talk, he began to draw, and sheets of the horses and faces which he copied, at the age of nine or ten, may still be seen.

A year or two later, he painted a series of small subjects from Walter Scott's poems and novels, which already reveal

a fine sense for colour, and no inconsiderable degree of imaginative powers, while a spirited composition of the struggle for the body of Patroclus bears witness to the vividness with which he realised the scene described by Homer. As a boy George Watts entered the Academy school, but finding no teaching there worth the name, he left off attending these classes at the end of a few weeks. His taste for sculpture led him to visit the studio of William Behnes, where he drew from casts and watched the portrait-sculptor at work, but never received any direct instruction.

His real teachers, as he has often said, were the Elgin Marbles. From the first, young Watts was profoundly impressed by these perfect forms. They became the standard by which he tried his own work, and from which his feeling for style and form were derived. "I paint ideas, not objects," Mr. Watts once said to a friend. These words, as a French writer M. R. de la Sizeranne in *La Revue des Deux Mondes* remarked the other day, sum up the whole of his art. For the range of his sympathies is as wide as the universe itself, and he seeks to express in painting, not only the poetic dreams of his fancy, but the deepest yearnings of his soul.

"I paint," he tells us, "first of all because I have got something to say." Since the gift of words has been denied him, he speaks to the world in the language of art, which if less definite, has an office and mission of its own. He does not choose his subjects for the sake of their beauty of form or colour; far less does he seek to display any technical skill

that he may possess. But he tries to express his ideas in as perfect a form as possible "because a well-written book tells its story with greater force than a badly written one." And since he saw long ago that Phidias invested his themes with dignity and charm, he seeks as far as possible to clothe the ideas that are set forth in his pictures with lovely form and harmonious colouring. "My intention," he says, "has not been so much to paint pictures that will charm the eye, as to suggest great thoughts that will appeal to the imagination and the heart, and kindle all that is best and noblest in humanity." These thoughts are in the widest sense of the word religious. "I teach great truths, but I do not dogmatise. On the contrary, I purposely avoid all reference to creeds and appeal to men of all ages and every faith. I lead them to the church door, and then they can go in, and see God in their own way."

And as ideas govern the choice of his subject, so the same intellectual intention asserts itself in every detail of his pictures. The form which he adopts, the quality and texture of the surface, the very colours which he uses, are all chosen with the same care, and correspond with the nature of his theme. Mr. Watts seldom makes preparatory studies for his pictures, but thinks out his subject first, and then sketches it out on the canvas itself. In painting abstract types, he works little from models, his object being to forget realities as far as possible, and only makes small pencil sketches of such limbs and muscles as he may require, to serve as a guide. And although he never smears his colour, and always keeps

the edges clear and well defined, he purposely surrounds his ideal forms with a clouded atmosphere, to enhance the sense of mystery and grandeur that belongs to the nature of the subject. This element of mystery and largeness, which is so marked a feature of Mr. Watts's style, does not prevent him from bestowing the utmost care and finish on each separate detail. "Remember the daisies," is his favourite motto. But he shrinks with a dislike approaching to horror from all display of manual dexterity, and is anxious to avoid anything that may distract the attention of the spectator or weaken the impression produced upon his mind.

In early days the young artist dreamt of building a great temple or House of Life, with wide corridors and stately halls, containing a grand series of paintings on the mysteries of Life and Death. That dream, alas! was never destined to be realised, and we are not to have a Sistine Chapel adorned by the hand of our Michel Angelo. But the painter, at least, has done his part, and the noble series of ethical works to which he has devoted the best years of his life will after his death, become the property of the nation.* Perhaps the first thing that strikes us when we look at these pictures, so monumental in form and so profound in their symbolism, is their essentially modern character. Mr. Watts, as I have said, is a mystic, but he is, above all, a child of his age. There is nothing Greek or Mediæval in his ideas; he does not turn away with a shudder from the present, or look back with wistful longings at the past. On the contrary, he is

*These works are now in the Tate Gallery, London.

thoroughly in sympathy with the aspirations of the modern world, and one great object of his art is to give full expression to the character and scope of contemporary thought. Echoes of Carlyle, of Wordsworth, and of Ruskin seem to haunt all his work. Lines from Browning and Tennyson rise unconsciously to our lips as we stand before his pictures.

This is nowhere more evident than in the cycle of paintings which have Death for their subject. Like the great Florentines and the old German painters and engravers, Mr. Watts's thoughts are busy with Death. But in his dreams, Death is shorn of all her terrors. The skull and crossbones have vanished, and in their stead we have the solemn white-robed Angel, full of tenderness and compassion.

First of the series is the picture of the three figures, *Time, Death and Judgment.* Here Time appears no more as the aged, white-bearded sage, but as a stalwart youth with head erect and auburn locks crowned with roses, moving rapidly forward with resolute tread and relentless speed. At his side is Death, a fair, pale woman, who, kinder than Time, looks down sadly at the gathered flowers in her lap. The sun of this world is setting in the blue sky behind them, and the full moon rises in the eastern horizon. Above them Judgment floats in the air, robed in scarlet draperies, and bearing in one hand the avenging sword, in the other the scales in which human deeds are weighed. He follows closely in the steps of Time and Death, and, looking upwards, awaits the final sentence. But his face is hidden by his outstretched

arm, and none can know the word he has to speak. Death comes to all, but comes in different forms. If for some her face is stern, to others she comes as a blessed angel, the consoler of this world's wrongs; in Mr. Watts's own words: "The kind nurse who puts the children to bed." Some welcome her gladly, others rise reluctantly at her call and cast a lingering look at all they leave behind. This thought is well brought out in the Court of Death, one of Mr. Watts's grandest and most impressive designs. We see Death, the great winged Angel, sitting enthroned on the ruins of the world, robed in a flowing winding-sheet and holding a little child, emblem of the new and better life, in her arms. The sky is golden beyond, and attendant spirits wait on either side, ready to draw aside the veil that hides the unseen world. At the foot of her throne stand a group of mortals who have appeared to answer her summons.

But the most famous, the most perfect of all Mr. Watts's creations, is the picture of *Love and Death*. The origin of the conception has been often described. Mr. Watts was painting the portrait of a friend in the prime of life, a young nobleman, richly endowed with the best of this world's gifts, who was dying slowly of consumption. As the artist saw how little the fondest efforts could avail to arrest the progress of disease, a deep sense of the helplessness of Love's struggle with Fate sank into his mind, and many years afterwards found expression in this picture. The theme is a common one, but not even the Greeks clothed the old story with a more tragic grandeur. Death, a mighty form, draped in

white from head to foot, advances with outstretched arm into the house of Life, all unheeding of Love, the fair boy who meets him on the threshold and struggles passionately to bar the way. Poor Love is rudely pushed aside, his bright wings ruffled and crushed in the fray, while the blossoming roses drop withered from the door-posts, and on the step the turtle-dove moans in her loneliness: so powerless is human love to avert the stroke of destiny. But Fate itself is kinder than mortals dream. The bowed head and veiled face, the very action of the upraised arm, tell us that Death is pitiful for all his might, and the light breaking on the white-robed form reminds us that all may yet be well with our beloved. Mr. Watts, after his wont, has painted many different versions of this picture, each with some slight alteration in the action or play of light, which gives new significance to his theme. But, although Death plays a leading part in Mr. Watts's ethical paintings, his teaching does not end there. In a companion work he has shown us Love, no longer worsted in the battle with Death, but as the Angel of Life, fair and strong in his immortal youth, leading the trembling and fragile maiden up the rocky mountain side, and helping her gently over the rough places. The way is steep and the path "winds up-hill all the way," but he bids her look up and cheers her fainting soul with a glimpse of the celestial heights. Of all Mr. Watts's allegories, this one is, in his own eyes, the most full of significance, and he considers it his most direct message to the present generation.

DUEL AFTER THE MASQUERADE

(*Jean Léon Gérome*)

THEOPHILE GAUTIER

ONE is always certain of finding a large crowd standing before Gérôme's *Duel*. It is the popular success of the Salon; and, as the picture is not large, one has to wait for his turn to see it. This popularity, I hasten to remark, is not due to any method that is foreign to art. Nourished by the severest studies and naturally endowed with an exceptionally pure taste, the young master would scorn a triumph gained at such a price. The strangeness of the subject attracts the public and the merit of the execution holds the connoisseur. It would be almost trite to say that the forms and costumes of modern life are not attractive to the painter. Artists are so convinced of this fact, that they prefer to borrow the subjects of their compositions. It is only in the last extremity, in the portrait for instance, that they resign themselves to the fashions of the day, and even then they alter them as much as possible by the introduction of mantles, *burnous* shawls, scarfs and other accessories having some special character. Even in genre pictures they stop at the last century with the picturesque material of the Pyrenees, Brittany, Aragon and Algeria. The number of canvases that might be used in future ages as documents for our interiors, furniture, costumes, types and modes of living, is extremely

Duel After the Masquerade — Gérôme

limited; and, unfortunately, almost always of mediocre execution. It would seem that the art of to-day is affected by farsightedness, and can only discern objects belonging to remote and bygone ages: it sees nothing in what is taking place. Aside from portraits and some official pictures few canvases depict the present period. We must, therefore, thank M. Gérôme, the painter of Grecian elegance, the Pompeian archæologist, the expert in exotic and primitive types, for having selected a subject from our modern life: he risks much in handling a scene of which every one is, or thinks he is, capable of judging, and in adapting new matter, new physiognomies and new attire to the exigencies of art. What would have been the result if he had painted a duel fought in black coats?

The idea of the *Duel after the Masquerade* is ingenious, thrilling, romantic; it impresses both eye and mind by the antithesis of the action and the actors—terrible action and grotesque actors, a duel of Pierrots and Harlequins elevated to a tragic height, without avoiding a single comic detail. Some young men, probably overheated with wine, have quarrelled on the steps of the Opera, or in some cabinet in the Maison d'Or, on account of a push with an elbow, a too-cutting sarcasm, a slight fit of jealousy, or for any other trifling reason. One of those busy bodies, who are always ready to display courage with the blood of other people, has procured swords, and without taking time to change their costumes the merrymakers have gone in two carriages to the Bois de Boulogne, where the grey dawn is just beginning to

open its heavy eyes upon the morning mist through which skeletons of slender trees are dimly seen. The snow has covered the earth with a white winding-sheet that has been spread out during the night as if to receive the dead. Cold and silence and solitude have kept watch so that nothing should disturb the duellists; and, indeed, they have succeeded only too well in this unfortunate affair. Foot-prints in the snow show the place of the struggle: one of the duellists—Pierrot—has been wounded and could repeat Mercutio's funereal pun: "Ask me to-morrow and you shall find me a grave man!" The red stains of blood are spreading over the cassock with the big buttons, the legs, which life is leaving and over which the will has no longer any control, lie inert upon the snow, and even in the loose trousers seem already in a shroud. Were it not for the support of a friend, dressed as a valet of the Comédie-Française, he would lie prostrate. The pallor of death appears through the paint that has been partly wiped from the face of poor Pierrot; his dull eye already stares into vacancy and on the drawn lips his expiring sigh leaves a rosy foam.

The sleeve of the right arm, turned up above the elbow for the combat, exposes the quivering flesh and weak muscles of the young debauchee, who still holds in his contracted fingers the sword that has so badly defended its master.

Another person, dressed in the costume of a Chinese mandarin, in red and green, covered with flowers of fantastic design, has dropped upon his knees and is examining with terrible anxiety the blood-stained breast of his victim. A

little in the rear of this group a man in a black domino is lifting his hands with a gesture of despair, as if about to tear his hair at the deplorable result of this silly quarrel.

Another group, quite a little distance from the first one, is composed of the murderer and his second—a Harlequin and a Mohican. Harlequin, in preparing for the fight, has thrown on the snow his black mask and his cloak; his blood-stained sword lies on the ground and these significant accessories skilfully connect the two parts of the composition; the Harlequin seems to be excitedly telling the Indian, whose arm he is grasping, that his opponent did not parry, that he ran himself upon the sword and other explanations; and his companion bends his head as if to ask "What can we do about it?" In the background the black silhouette of the carriage of the wounded man assumes in the fog the melancholy look of a hearse, and the drivers, who are whispering together, seem like undertakers.

Surely this is odd and sinister, a strange mixture of wild and romantic fancy with philosophical daring. To mix up the Carnival and Death, to change the wooden sword of Harlequin into a real sword; to transform the spots of wine into bloodstains, to surround the death agony with a circle of masks and to ask of Harlequin—"what hast thou done with thy brother Pierrot?"—all this would make the most intrepid pause. M. Gérôme has performed this difficult, not to say impossible, task with an icy severity, a pitiless *sang-froid,* an irony superior to fate. He has omitted nothing: there is the crimson hole that a drop of warm blood has

melted in the snow; there are the spangles glittering on the lozenges of the murderer's coat; there is the bear's claw on the collar of the Indian; there is the formless and battered mask; and the cold death sweat that dissolves the paint on the face of the dying man.

All this is rendered with a clean, firm, delicate and sure touch which keeps everything perfectly united, and a tone that is sober, neutral and *wintry*, so to speak, created by the livid shuddering pallor of the chief figure in the midst of which the brilliant vivid hues of the costumes produce a sinister discord. The face of Pierrot, who is sobered by the approach of Death and who is passing from the dizzy whirl of a masked ball to the silence of the tomb, is a creation of powerful orginality. No grimace, no melodrama, no straining after effect. There is something here as striking and strong as a page of Mérimée. The impression produced is all the more profound because the narrator *appears* indifferent.

M. Gérôme, like a careful artist, does not leave his frames to the fancy of the gilder. He has designed the one for this picture: on the top are two masks—tragic and comic—separated by a fool's bauble. Does not Folly dance between Joy and Sorrow, causing one to be born of the other?

1814

(*J. L. E. Meissonier*)

LIONEL ROBINSON

THE commencement of the Nineteenth Century probably marks the moment at which everywhere but in England the art of painting had touched its lowest level; and even in France, where the Revolution had stirred thoughts and stimulated hopes, David, Vernet and Gros barely awakened the Art-loving public from the lethargy into which it had sunk. It was the literary not the political revolt, which summoned French artists to take part in a struggle against the servitude to old forms and academic traditions, and inspired each painter to clothe his own inspirations in the dress which presented them as realities. The long and eager contest between the Classicists and the Romanticists is practically conterminous with the reign of Louis-Philippe, and to that period may be assigned a renascence in France of both Art and literature, which made itself felt throughout the civilised world.

It was at the height of this controversy, of which he was to be an indifferent spectator, that Meissonier appeared before the public. Born at Lyons on February 21, 1815, the son of a father who is alternately described as a dry-salter and a druggist, by inheritance and his surroundings J. L. Ernest Meissonier was without any of those predisposing influences

which have determined the career of many a genius. His mother, who died when he was quite young, is said to have had some skill as a painter on china and ivory, and from her he may have inherited a delicate hand and an accurate eye; but the city of Lyons, forgetful of its Art-children, refusing them bread in life although giving them stones after death, preserves no evidence of Madame Meissonier's capacities. It is possible, however, that through his father also our artist may have inherited some Art tendencies. At the end of the Seventeenth Century (1695) there was born at Turin a child who was subsequently known in France as Juste Aurèle Meissonier, of whose early life no record survives. All that is known for certain is that whilst still young he had acquired reputation as a goldsmith, painter, sculptor and architect, and that he left his native country and came to France. His merit was there soon recognised, and he was appointed goldsmith and designer in metal-work to Louis XV. That he had definitely established himself in France, and that he died in 1750, is about all that we know for certain respecting Juste Aurèle Meissonier; but possibly having called attention to a point which seems so far to have escaped the notice of French biographers, we may arouse the interest of such as hold that the seeds of genius are not self-sown in the soil which brings them to perfection. When only a few years old, like his fellow-townsman and contemporary, Chenavard, he was brought by his father to Paris, where the latter opened a shop in the Rue des Ecouffes, a small street lying between the Rue du Temple and the Hôtel de

1814 Meissonier

Ville, and near to the picturesque centre of old Paris. As an *externe* of a school in Rue des Francs Bourgeois, the young provincial lad would have found himself, in his daily walks to and fro, constantly coming in contact with spots which recalled the most dramatic events of French history from the days of the Fronde. His school career, however, was not brilliant, and there is a legend that he made himself conspicuous amongst his fellows chiefly by the sketches with which he covered his copy-books. Having get through his school years, he soon gave evidence that drugs, even when destined for others, were as distasteful to him as his lessons had been.

After a brief struggle with his *bourgeois* self-respect, M. Meissonier *père* consented in a half-hearted way to allowing his son to follow the drawing-lessons of Jules Potier, an artist whom, with many another "*Grand Prix de Rome*" posterity has now wholly forgotten. Happily for the young Meissonier, he did not remain long enough with his master to acquire anything he needed to forget in later life. He passed almost as little time with Léon Cogniet, an artist of no small repute, as his ceiling decorations of the Louvre and other works abundantly testify. From his new master Meissonier may have acquired his liking for uniforms and horses and soldiers; but there is little else of the master traceable in the pupil's after career. It is more probable that his best instructors were his fellow students, Daubigny, Daumier, Steinheil, Dechaume, Trimolet, and other men who felt that they had their way to make, and that they had heads and hands

with which to make it. The encouragement, moreover, which the lad had received from Tony Johannot, the most successful book illustrator of the day, doubtless went far to remove the *droguiste's* scruples and to facilitate his entry into Cogniet's studio. It was, however, by Trimolet's advice that young Meissonier set himself seriously to study the Flemish and Dutch masters in the Louvre. In the interval of his copyings he made water-colour sketches, and a little later in association with Trimolet, he undertook the painting of fans, missals, Scripture cards and emblems for the booksellers. There is, moreover, a story current that at this time Meissonier in conjunction with Daubigny was supplying the dealers with pictures for exportation at the rate of five francs a *mètre*. How long he and his friends lived on the proceeds of their work, supplemented by the slender allowance of fifteen francs a month made by his father, it is not necessary to inquire; but the period of his unrecognised labours could not have been long, for his career can be traced by his works from the time he had reached his twentieth year.

On the breaking out of the war in Italy he without difficulty obtained permission to accompany the staff of the French army as painter in ordinary, and was well received at headquarters. He had previously been qualifying for this change of style from genre, simple and subjective, to the higher level of historical genre by reading M. Thiers's history of the campaigns of the First Empire, and by the not less careful study of the anatomy of the horse. As early as 1851 he had exhibited the *Troupe en Marche,* a long line of horsemen

dressed in picturesque Louis XIII. costumes, straggling over the rising ground; but the limits of the panel scarcely gave a fair idea of the artist's power in producing the effect of crowded soldiery. His Italian campaign was to open up to Meissonier new fields of fame, and fresh though bloodless triumphs. *Solferino* was, at the time of its production (1860), a large canvas for Meissonier to work upon. It measured at least twelve inches by eight; but in this space the artist managed to introduce a likeness of the Emperor (Napoleon III.), which the most fastidious admit to be excellent, and at the same time to convey an idea of the battlefield extended at his feet. *Solferino,* in the eyes of many competent critics, marked the culminating point of Meissonier's powers, and few even of his friends anticipated that he would, without danger to his reputation, attempt to revive with any suggestion of historical accuracy the battlefields of a former generation.

Up to this period he had given no sign of the direction in which his thoughts were working, when he suddenly broke upon the artistic world with the first of a series of pictures by which he has illustrated the "Napoleonic Cycle." He was indeed known to have been heaping up innumerable cast-off uniforms of the old Imperial Guard, and to have ransacked the Rue du Temple for every military relic of the days of the Consulate and of the French Empire, but his friends paid no special attention to the indulgence of a taste which had grown with the means of gratifying it. In his early school days, too, he had doubtless often frequented the well-

known haunts of the Paris *fripiers* which lay round his home and school, and had made himself familiar with many of the cast-off uniforms to which he was afterwards to give a new lustre. In some slight sketches, moreover, dating from the time he first set to work on *Solferino,* or perhaps even earlier, we can trace a growing tendency to put forward the military side of French life, although possibly it may have been held in check by political convictions. His studies of sentries and outposts, his pictures of orderly officers and of foraging parties owed much of their picturesqueness to the costumes of the Imperial Guard, and by degrees he seems to have been tempted to blend the strangely diversified materials into a harmonious whole. This seems to be the most reasonable explanation of his inversion of history. Unlike the historian or the novelist, he began his work with the *dénouement.* The first of the three great pictures illustrative of the Napoleonic story was that entitled *1814,* exhibited in 1864 under the title of *Campagne de France;* subsequent writers, regardless of the date assigned, have associated it with the *Campagne de Russie* and the retreat from Moscow. It matters little, however, whether the snow-covered plains are those of Champagne or Wilna. The Grand Army has been forced to retire; Napoleon on his white horse, followed by his staff, is slowly retreating before his enemies. The deep-ploughed snow-ruts show that along that road his troops have been moving for many hours; but it is only when he recognises the uselessness of further resistance that the

Emperor has turned his back upon his pursuers. In the background the serried lines of his troops seem to lose themselves in the distance; but upon the whole mass, as well as upon each individual figure, is impressed the sentiment of defeat, discouragement and despair. Immediately behind the Emperor comes Marshal Ney, then Berthier, asleep in his saddle, utterly worn out, M. de Flahaut, Generals Drouot, Gourgand, etc. His *Cuirassiers,* otherwise known as *1805* (1871), serves as the starting-point of his illustrations of the Napoleonic legend, although the last to be painted. A regiment of cavalry is advancing regularly in line, the signal to charge has not yet been sounded; the Emperor is not distinguishable from his staff, which is placed on a slight eminence in the background. To the left the *Guides,* with their pelisses flying in the air, are galloping forward to feel for the enemy barely distinguishable in the distance; in the centre the infantry is massed awaiting orders; on the right the artillery is just about to open fire on the valley below, where a few wreaths of smoke are all that suggest the terrible scene about to be enacted. This picture, which was sold for an enormous sum—according to some authorities for 400,000 francs—went, like so many others of Meissonier's productions, to the United States, where, in a fire in New York, it was burnt in the store-room in which it had been temporarily deposited. In the third picture of the series, *Friedland,* or *1807,* we have the triumphant defiling of the cavalry of the Guard before the Emperor who, in this picture, occupies the central spot. The scene is bright, in spite of the barren

stretch of land over which war in its most desolating shape has recently passed. Grouped around the Emperor are Bessières, Duroc and Berthier; whilst just behind him General Nansouty is awaiting orders to advance the *Vieille Garde,* of which the tall bearskins and white breeches are conspicuous on the left of the picture. Meissonier is said to have spent no less than fifteen years of labour on this picture; and it is easy to credit this statement in presence of the sixty-seven sketches made for it which were displayed at the collective exhibition of his works. Mr. Stewart, of New York, ultimately became its purchaser for 300,000 francs ($60,000).

To these important works should be added *Moreau and Dessoles* (1876) on the morning of the battle of Hohenlinden, when still "all bloodless lay the untrodden snow," surveying the scene of the coming engagement from a rock under some trees. We can only refer incidentally to a number of smaller works, in which the motives of one or other of the three more important ones were introduced with slight variations of costumes and surroundings; of these the most noteworthy were: *A Cavalry Charge* (1869), purchased by Mr. Probosco of Cincinnati; *Marshal Saxe and his Staff* (also in the United States); *General Desaix à l'Armée du Rhin* (1867), and one or two others.

LA CHASSE AU FAUCON

(*Eugène Fromentin*)

LOUIS GONSE

FROMENTIN shows entirely new qualities after the Salon of 1861. In the first place, he rises from the sketch to the picture; he leaves the Sahara for the Sahel, the summer sun for the freshness and verdure of Spring. He tries to get his colour clear, and gradually more combined and fresh; his true instinct counsels him to flee from black as a mortal enemy,—that intentional black of certain painters who think they thus imitate the Old Masters. All the delicate greys, which are the luminous half-tints of white, appear insensibly under his brush lighter and more flexible as picture follows picture. After having shown himself a distinguished colourist, he becomes and afterwards remains a harmonist of the most subtle feeling. He justifies much more fully now than when he first appeared Sainte-Beuve's expression, and "produces his greatest effects by marvellously combining simple means."

As soon as he has started on this course, which is essentially a more pictorial one, his *metier* progresses without a check. From the point of view of technical qualities, one might say that his later pictures are the best, even though they do not produce the same frank impression and vivacious effect as his early works. And in this definitive form of his talent, he

owed much to Corot. Undoubtedly this evolution may be explained by the essential remark that Fromentin, after a certain date, painted only from memory with the well considered freedom of a man who lives on a hoard garnered in himself, and who refines his methods to the limit.

Moreover, I will note that a very individual tendency of Fromentin's studies becomes more prominent after the year 1861: I mean his very strong love for horses. The horse plays a part in his compositions with constantly increasing frequency: the elegant, aristocratic horse; the blooded horse with proud and spirited bearing, having its own poetry and language. Fromentin's horse has always interested me. It is never insignificant, nor even ordinary. We understand its movements, its gaze, the rarities of its form and hide which he has painted with a loving hand. However, in spite of his profound knowledge of the horse, I mean the Arab horse, which he has travelled to seek in its own home and represented in its natural frame, it is perhaps in the drawing of this animal, which is so difficult, and its correct anatomy, that Fromentin most visibly betrays the insufficiency of his early studies. Besides, if we may credit one of his fellow students who worked with him in the studio together with Pils, who was then painting the *Passage of the Alma,* it must be noted that Fromentin painted the horse much oftener and better from memory, or from intuition, I was going to say from *chic,* than from nature. That does not astonish me. Throughout his career as a painter, one may say that the horse was to him an object of continual and very often fallacious struggle.

La Chasse au Faucon Fromentin

His intimate outpourings and his letters often show traces of this. He was bitterly irritated with the obstacles which he encountered in that more than in any other direction. As a proof I will quote from only one letter written from La Rochelle in September, 1874, to M. Charles Busson, the landscape painter, one of his best friends:

"I have, as you know, *Euloge* and an Arab horse. I have worked on both, unfortunately without much method, learning everything and studying nothing really thoroughly. So that, after doing a great deal of work, I am not at all satisfied with myself. I am not much further advanced than I was before in the exact knowledge of my animal. There is a whole world to be studied. I have scarcely begun, not to represent it, but merely to comprehend its proportions, and, as for the knowledge of the details most necessary for the simple construction of it, I don't know the first thing about it. Perhaps the only benefit I shall gain from the numerous studies and drawings I bring is in having had a change of light and studio, and having in Paris under my eyes, to support and guide me, something which by its aspect reminds me a little more of nature."

The very numerous drawings of horses that appeared at the sale after the death of Fromentin afford still better evidence of his efforts. The action in these is always perfectly true. A good half of the studies in colour that he left were also studies of horses. There was one series in particular, some of the finest quality, dated 1874, which I have every reason to believe were the studies made at La Rochelle in

1874. I can not leave the horses without quoting the following fine passage about the Arab horse in his *Sahel:* "Gentle and valiant beast! As soon as a man lays his hand on its neck to grasp its mane, its eye lights up, and we see a shiver run through its hocks. Once mounted and bridle in hand, the rider has no need to make him feel the spur. He tosses his head for a moment making the brass or silver of his harness rattle, he draws back his head and his neck expands in a superb fold; then he darts away, carrying his rider with those grand movements of the body which are given to equestrian statues."

In 1863, Fromentin exhibited the calm and melancholy picture of the *Bivouac arabe au lever du jour;* the *Fauconnier arabe,* one of the most brilliant of his small pictures; and the *Chasse au faucon, en Algérie.* He has often repeated this in oil, water-colour and crayon, this bold falconer who makes his horse gallop over the plain at full speed.

The *Fauconnier arabe* belongs to M. Lepel-Cointet. The dominant of its magnificent colour is the coquelicot red, that pure red "scarcely to be expressed by the palette, inflamed by sunlight, and driven to the utmost ardour by irritant contacts." The *Chasse au faucon en Algérie,* known also under the name of the *Curée,* belongs to the Musée de Luxembourg.* In this typical picture, one of the best compositions among all the works of the master, emerald greens, opal greys and sapphire blues gleam and glitter. The superb horse in the foreground, of an immaculate white, is full of race and

*Now in the Louvre.

fire. I have seen in the south an example of that extraordinary coat, in which all is white and rose, the mane, the hoofs, the eyes and the mouth. It was the most beautiful animal I ever saw. It belonged to Si-Ali-Bey, then Caid of Tuggert.

The grand *Chasse au heron,* in the collection of the Duc d'Aumale, burst like fireworks on the Salon of 1865. The *Chasse au heron* might make a pendant to the *Chasse au faucon* of 1874. These two pictures equally deserve their fame; they measure the same, they have the same importance of sky charged with transparent vapours and luminous clouds, cottony and silky, the same low horizon, the same feeling of expanse, depth and air, the same gaiety of aspect, the same limpidity of execution woven in the play of values of the rarest choice, the same equilibrium, the same nobility of composition of a landscape known to memory, exact, real, striking, and yet invented, the same spangles, the same clearness in a light glittering like silver, with I know not what insensible gradations that recall Claude and Turner. Thus, as our friend M. Charles Timbal sums it up perfectly in his article in the journal *Le Français* on the exhibition of Fromentin's works: "The manner of the painter is unfolded there in all its freshness; it is impossible to unite in truer harmony the waters, the sky and the horizon. One might eternally propose the study of such skies as an example to young painters who are disdainful of the smiles of nature."

After looking at his work in detail, let us look at it as a whole. Fromentin is fastidious among the most fastidious,

and to estimate him at his right value a man must himself be fastidious. He is a sensitive painter in the finest acceptation of the word, and, consequently, nervous, tender, and somewhat restless. His aims are of the highest distinction; and, in his pursuit of the true expression of nature, he remains a pure realist. His dominant qualities are a refined feeling for gesture and movement, a lively imagination, a happy gift of composition, with select and elegant forms, and, in nature, the rendering of luminous effects in their infinite surprises. His virtues are aristocratic tastes, reserved manners, absolute respect for himself and his talents, and the, perhaps, excessive horror of noise and militant attitudes. His particular characteristic is an extraordinary strength of memory, a strength that comprises at the same time the memory of the mind and that of the hand. He is a painter more by instinct than by education; and his instinct is often a better guide than patient study is. The goal which he set up for himself is simple and clear—to make man live in the same life as the nature that frames him. His means are complex and very fine. He is rarely naïve; but he is always sincere.

WHERE THE DEER MEET*

(Gustave Courbet)

PHILIP GILBERT HAMERTON

FEW parts of France are more beautiful than the valley of the Doubs, and Courbet has always preserved a strong landscape instinct which may owe much of its vigour to an early delight in the picturesque scenery that surrounded him. He was intended for the bar, but could not resist the passion for painting, and when he was sent to Paris to study law, neglected it altogether for the fine arts. Strictly speaking, he never had anything like what is usually understood by an education, that is, he never underwent that long and steady course of discipline which gives great practical certainty and efficiency at the sacrifice of originality. Courbet learned his art in very various ways; he was at one time pupil of a painter called Flageoulot, a follower of David; but of course

*A lovely example, called *Le Remise des Chevreuils* is in the Louvre. A gentle stream flows through a thick forest. In and about it are four deer,—one stag, one quite young stag whose horns are beginning to push, and two fawns. The picture is filled with a delightful, joyous and peaceful atmosphere. The sunlight seems to come in from every direction, and to make trees, deer, stones and water radiant with warmth and brilliancy. The picture was presented to the Louvre by a society of amateurs who paid $15,200 for it. It is about six by five feet, and is one of the gems of the Louvre—*D. Cady Eaton, A Handbook of Modern French Painting* (New York, 1909).

the traditions of the school of David could have no hold upon him, any more than traditions of hen-wisdom have upon young ducks, and therefore we cannot consider this pupilage to have been for Courbet in any sense an education. Afterwards he worked hard at the open *atelier* kept in Paris by Suisse, a place where there is, strictly speaking, no instruction, but where young and older artists draw just as they like from the living model. He had a few lessons from Stuben, and worked a little in the *atelier* of Hesse. This isolation and independence were serious obstacles to his early career, because they made him disliked by the influential painters who kept the great *ateliers,* and who often had the power of rejecting works presented at the exhibition. Courbet was thus rejected during six years, which only confirmed him in his own ways of work and led to still greater self-assertion in his art.**

** You know the knife that artists use for manipulating the colours on their palette. I do not know whether in the past great artists employed it as a supplement to the brush and made use of it in painting; what I do know is that in this century Courbet makes constant use of it, and that he produces extraordinary effects with it. That breadth of execution and that beauty of colour that everybody recognises as his is partly the result of it. Laid on with the palette-knife, the tone acquires a delicacy and transparence that the brush could never give to it. Look at his *Chevreuil aux ecoutes.* Examine that ground, those running waters, those spaces under the trees so clear and light, that deep and true harmony; all that is due to the use of the knife. Moreover, Courbet handles that instrument with unequalled dexterity. I believe he has perfected it; he has lengthened it and given it two parallel edges, and rendered it so flexible and supple that you might call it a pen in his fingers. Take any of his land-

Where the Deer Meet — Courbet

It is difficult in these days to realise quite fully the degree of animosity which a nature so independent as that of Courbet must have exerted twenty years ago amongst artists devoted to the maintenance of tradition. He was accused of intense pride, an accusation which in some measure justifies itself by developing still farther the energy of his self-reliance and stiffening his originality into stubbornness.

The river Doubs, which gives its name to the department where Courbet was born, takes its source in the Jura, flows first to the northeast, then turns suddenly to the left, and after some time turns again, so that it flows henceforth in a direction precisely contrary to its first direction. The tongue of land thus enclosed by the river resembles in shape the end of the Italian boot; and Ornans, the birthplace of Courbet, is situated in the middle of the peninsula between the young mountain stream at Arçon and the mature river that reflects the strong forts of Besançon. Ornans has also a little river of its own, the Loue, which, after having gained

scapes and you may know whether he is a good landscape painter when earth, sky, water, trunks and foliage are all executed with the knife. Animals and human figures are almost the only things for which he takes the brush, because then the brush gives him, at the same time as the movement of the muscles, the tone either of the hide or of the flesh. I remember the time when Courbet kept a studio. His pupils, astonished at his manual dexterity, all had their knives made similar to the one they saw him manage with such ease. But alas! the art of the colourist does not lie entirely in his instrument, it lies also and more particularly in the sure mirror of the eye which distinguishes at the first glance the tone and its values; very few succeeded in their attempts.—*J. A. Castagnary.*

strength in many windings joins the Doubs below Dôle. It is a country in the highest degree favourable to the development of a painter. The valley of the Doubs, easily accessible from Ornans, is one of the most beautiful in France. Some years ago the present writer made up his mind to live there, and explored it in various ways, staying at different places and examining every unoccupied house. Whenever a place seemed suitable, I took care to study its immediate neighbourhood, seeking especially for those natural beauties which are most dear to me—the rocky dells with pure, refreshing streams, the groups of majestic trees, the towering heights of hill and cliff, and the level meadows by the shore of the green transparent river. The whole valley was enchantingly beautiful; the hills were lofty enough and especially steep enough for sublimity, with bold, clear-cut curves of inexpressible majesty and grace. At their feet was a narrow plain of fertile land, through which wandered the waters of the Doubs—waters so exquisitely pure that they seemed like flowing emerald to me who had come from the banks of the yellow and opaque Yonne.

In this wild country Courbet got a love for rocky streams and woody haunts of the wild deer, which is part of his complex nature as an artist. He has a very strong landscape instinct, which shows itself not only in the production of many landscapes, but also in the frequent choice of sylvan backgrounds. Let it be noted, in the contrast between him and Ingres, that Courbet loves landscape and paints it with strong sentiment and affection; while Ingres neglects and despises

it, and, when he introduces it at all,—as, for instance, the rock and vegetation in the *Source*—does so on strictly conventional principles. This is one of the most marked distinctions between the Realist and Classical schools. Almost every Realist painter enjoys landscape, if only in a background; but the Classicists have no enjoyment of it, or repress this taste as contrary to the severity of their art.

THE SPANISH MARRIAGE

(*Mariano Fortuny*)

BARON DAVILLIER

IN 1867, Fortuny made a trip to Madrid: his marriage with Cecilia de Madrazo, daughter of Federico de Madrazo, director of the *Museo Real* was decided on. He told me that it was after several visits to the sacristy of his parish church that the idea of his *Spanish Marriage* came to him; he then made a slight study for it, in a somewhat hasty note that was merely the embryo of the picture which a little later was to make him famous. During his stay at Madrid, which lasted several months, he often visited the *Museo* where, among other copies, he executed two fine water-colours after Velasquez, and another after Van Dyck. Among the pictures he copied in oil were the *Aesopus* and *Menippe* by Velasquez; the *Family of Charles IV.* and several portraits by Goya; the *Saint Jerome* by Ribera, and several others.

On his return to Rome, Fortuny set to work without wasting any time. His *Spanish Marriage* occupied a great deal of his attention; but this did not prevent him from sparing a few hours for water-colour and pen-and-ink drawings, on which he usually worked in the evening, among which I may cite the portrait of his friend D'Epinay. He also painted the portraits of his friends and compatriots Villegas, Moragas and Francés. He made a short tour in Tuscany, and to-

The Spanish Marriage Fortuny

wards the end of the year returned to Rome, whence he wrote to his brother-in-law, De Madrazo: "Dear Raymundo. The Goupils have visited my studio, and it appears that the *Vicaria* (the *Spanish Marriage*) pleased them. Goupil has made a proposition to me that I shall go to Paris, where he offers to build me a studio to my own taste: he talks a lot about the *success* of my painting, etc. He says, that in Rome everybody is imitating me, that this is *disgusting,* and that in every respect it is necessary that I should leave this city."

In the month of March following, Henri Regnault, who had become acquainted with the Spanish painter whose water-colours had already struck him at Madrid, wrote to M. A. Duparc the impressions he had received in his studio: "I spent the morning of the day before yesterday with Fortuny, and it broke me all to pieces. That rascal is simply amazing! His studio contains marvels! He is the master of all of us. If you could only see the two or three pictures that he is just finishing and the water-colours that he has lately painted! They disgust me with my own! Ah! Fortuny, you prevent me from sleeping." "With regard to water colours," he wrote a little later, "I am not proud: Fortuny puts me in a blue funk!"

In two letters written a little later to Simonetti, Fortuny mentions several attacks of fever he has had lately. "By going into the churches in search of a background for my picture, I caught a fever, rheumatic at first, but ending with an '*accès de pernicieuse.*'"

It will be remarked that the word *pernicieuse* is under-

lined. It is probable that Fortuny had no doubt of the gravity of those perfidious attacks of fever, too frequent in the Roman climate, the return of which unhappily has nearly always a fatal result.

Going to Paris in July, 1869, Fortuny installed himself shortly after his arrival in the studio of Gérôme, who had offered it during his absence. He could work there more conveniently because M. Goupil, who lived in the country during the summer, had lent him his apartment which was situated near by. Here he made rapid progress with the *Spanish Marriage* which he completed in the Maison Vallin, avenue des Champs-Elysées, 69, where he had taken up his residence in the November following.

At this period he occasionally saw Meissonier for whose talents he had great admiration, and asked him for one of his studies to copy. The latter posed one day for his youthful brother artist for one of the figures in the *Spanish Marriage*.

Exhibited at Goupil's, in the spring of 1870, this wonderful picture produced an extraordinary sensation in Paris: talent so original and so new could not fail to excite the enthusiasm of Théophile Gautier who gave full vent to it in his article in the *Journal Officiel* of May 19th, 1870, as follows:

"The name which has been most often pronounced in the world of art during the last few months is most certainly that of Fortuny. A question which artists and art-lovers never failed to ask one another when they met was, 'have

you seen Fortuny's pictures?' For Fortuny is a painter of marvellous originality and accomplished talent, and already self-assured, although the artist has scarcely reached the age limit of a student competing for the *Prix de Rome*. It is an unexpected revelation, a sudden explosion for Paris which Fortuny has quite upset.

"Travelled Artists and those pupils who returned from the Villa Medicis spoke well of a highly gifted young man whom they regarded as *very strong*, and who was working in Rome in a fantastic style outside all school influence; but the foreign name that they mentioned being unsupported by any known work did not stick in the memory. The *Marriage in the Vicaria of Madrid*, the *Serpent Charmers*, easel pictures; and the *Carpet Merchant in Morocco*, the *Café des Hirondelles* and the *Kief*, water-colours of a strength of tone that competes with oil painting, bestow an incontestable worth on the name of Fortuny, and prove that what was said of him was not in the least tinged with exaggeration.

"Before giving our readers a view of these pictures—so far as words can represent colours and forms—a few biographical notes about Fortuny will perhaps be appropriate."

A few details, mostly inexact, follow. Thus Gautier gives 1839, instead of 1838, as the date of birth, and adds that the *Prix de Rome* was won in 1856, whilst the true date is 1857.

I will add here two or three little-known particulars of the picture about to be described. The scene does not repre-

sent the *Vicaria* of Madrid, nor any existing sacristy. The painter borrowed his background from different churches; for example, the grille, in the *Churrigueresque* style, belongs to the cathedral of Grenada, and other details from a church in Rome—the one where he contracted a malignant fever in 1869. Two female figures are portraits: Fortuny's wife, and her sister, Isabel de Madrazo. It was Meissonier who posed for the *señor* Gautier speaks of, the one who stands proudly in a green coat with long tails, girt with a broad belt on which hangs a long cavalry sabre.

The marriage that Fortuny represents takes place in the sacristy of a church in Madrid; a vast hall, the walls of which are hung with old Cordovan leather of faded hue, vaguely stamped with gold and branches of sunken colours. A grill, wrought with a marvellous wealth of branchings and arabesques of style which the Spaniards call *churrigueresco* and which corresponds to the French rococo, separates the sacristy from the church. Lamps are suspended from the ceiling. Pictures of marytrs, Venetian mirrors with richly carved oval frames, wooden benches curiously cut and pierced, and polished like metal by long use, a low bookcase in which are arranged the missals, gospels, antiphonaries and all those venerable folios with brass corners and clasps which are only opened on the lectern, tables large and small and a *brasero* of exquisite workmanship form the furniture of this hall in which the contract is signed, for there was not then, nor is there yet, civil marriage in Spain. Accord-

ing to the evidence of the costumes, the scene occurs at the close of the Eighteenth or the beginning of the Nineteenth Century; the fashions are almost the same as those in which Goya clothes the characters in his *caprichos*.

It is an old beau, who still shows some remains of elegance, being married to a poor, pretty girl. He leans over the table with a pose of affected grace, with bent legs and feet set outwards like a dancer, and puts his signature in the place pointed out to him by an obsequious *escribano*. He wears a pale lilac coat *à la Française* of the most gallant cut and carries a half-moon opera-hat flattened under his arm. As he stoops, he exposes a half bald skull; and the young bride is thinking of nothing but her wedding toilette, than which nothing in the world could be more fresh and coquettish: a white satin dress covered with lace, the flowers of which glitter like spangles; and in her hair at the corner of her ear a little spray of orange blossoms. While a friend is speaking to her, she absent-mindedly examines the coloured patterns of her fan, which is richer than any she ever yet possessed. It would be hard to imagine a head of more piquant and Spanish grace, with long eye-lashes that look like black butterflies fluttering over roses. Her friend also is very handsome in her full skirt of the most vivid rose taffeta. On the other side stands the mother, one of those old women who in Spain are familiarly called *"la tia Pelona, la tia Tomasa,"* a real broomstick rider who is dressed up in "hand-me-downs" from the *Rastro*, the Madrid *Temple*. A mantle of black lace covers her head and

shoulders; her narrow hips are swathed in a tight skirt, and her feet shuffle in down-at-heels slippers. A little in advance of the group is a *señor* who stands proudly in a long-tailed green coat girt with a broad belt from which hangs a long cavalry sabre. This is a friend of the bridegroom, or perhaps the godfather of the *novia*. Two or three women, brilliantly dressed and fanning themselves, among whom a lovely blonde is conspicuous, approach the bride to have a good look at her, and one of them turns back to give a coin to a penitent who is begging for souls in purgatory. This masked figure is a strange phantom, with a bare torse, scarred with the stripes of discipline, bony legs and black breeches, who holds above the alms-basin a little soul of carved wood emerging from red flames. In the corner on the same side sits an old gentleman whose spectacles reflect the light and made him look like an owl.

On the right in the foreground, on a high-backed wooden bench, a fine big fellow shows himself off, with whiskers cut in a semi-circle on his cheeks, and wearing the *mono* or chinon, with the embroidered vest, waist sash, short breeches and silk stockings of the *torero*. This must be an *espada* of some fame, judging by the richness of his costume and the superb nonchalance of his pose. Close beside him, a *manola* of rich complexion displays her loud toilette, her slippered feet showing prominently below a straw-yellow skirt, spotted with little rosy flowers. One hand plays with the fringe of the corsage and the other waves a big fan. Leaning on the back of the bench with respectful familiarity, are several

men in gay attire—*vestidos de majo*—who appear to belong to the *cuadrilla* of the sword. There is nothing to connect this group with the other, and this whole party looks as if it were present on its own account. The *torero* and *manola* are waiting for their turn.

In this description, let us not omit the ecclesiastic who stands beside the table on which the old beau is about to sign. He is a masterpiece of truth and finesse. Let us also point out two other priests or sacristans of marvellous truth of action who are arranging papers on a little desk placed further back to the left.

The *brasero,* placed in the left corner of the picture, very skilfully furnishes this corner of the composition which, in order to avoid too exact symmetry, the artist has not filled with as many figures as the right side holds.

The above is approximately the arrangement and stage setting of the picture, but what is more difficult to describe is the charming taste, the exquisite grace and the unexpected originality of this painting which possesses all the bloom of the tone of a sketch and all the finish of the most precious masterpiece. Side by side with parts broadly treated appear details of extraordinary finish, which halt and emphasise the masses without in the least depriving them of their action and flexibility.

The best idea that one could give of this singular canvas would be a sketch by Goya revised and retouched by Meissonier. In fact we find in it all the fantastic freedom of the Spanish painter and all the scrupulous truth of the

French master; to this must be added Fortuny's individuality which strikes a note between these two influences, which do not dominate it.

How harmonious the colour is in its boldness which does not fear to borrow tones from the Japanese palette, tones of exotic variety, pearl greys and neutral browns. What a light, expressive and spirituelle touch! What a knowledge of drawing is shown in those little figures so elegantly placed, with such natural and truthful action, and such expressive gestures!

Nothing can be added to Gautier's marvellous description which consecrates Fortuny's reputation.

THE HORSE FAIR

(*Rosa Bonheur*)

RENE PEYROL

LONG before she contemplated painting the *Labourage Nivernais,* Mademoiselle Bonheur, in order to make sketches and studies of animals intended for her pictures, had been in the habit of visiting the *abattoirs* of Paris, where, in the presence of butchers and cowherds she would pursue her work, not shrinking from the most repugnant scenes if she desired to make a sketch or study.

The success of the *Labourage* had inspired in her the idea of producing a picture which should be more important still. She was then in the full flush of her power, and her brave spirit did not shrink before enterprises which might well alarm painters even of the stronger sex. This new canvas which she projected was the *Horse Fair* (*Marché aux Chevaux)* of Paris, and for this work she made a great number of studies of horses which were placed at her disposal by her friends. But to paint this picture with success, it was necessary the artist should visit the market itself, and study there the various kinds, as also the different habits, of the horses as they appeared when exposed for sale. To an artist so conscientious and with so great a respect for truth, this visit appeared a duty she owed to Art. But, unfortunately, her experience at the *abattoirs* had given her a dread of the

inconvenience and unpleasantness to which her costume as a lady would subject her, if she dared to expose herself in the midst of the dealers and the crowd of ill-mannered men always to be met with at a horse-market. In order, therefore, that she might be unrestrained and be able to make studies without attracting special notice, she resolved to dress herself in man's clothes. The masculine vigour of her character, as also her hair, which she was in the habit of wearing short, contributed to perfect her disguise. This plan answered so well that the dealers at the market, in the midst of whom she made her sketches, took her for a young painter curious to study the habits of horses. They regarded it as a compliment when they saw her drawing their finest steeds, and willingly allowed them to pose before her. She was thus enabled quietly to pursue her work of making the sketches and studies for her great picture. It will thus be seen why Mademoiselle Bonheur first took to dressing herself in man's attire. It was not, as some have uncharitably remarked, from a mere desire to affect eccentricity.

At the Salon of 1850 Mademoiselle Bonheur exhibited two canvases representing a *Morning Effect* and some *Sheep*. There was no exhibition in 1851, and the artist allowed the year 1852 to pass by without exhibiting at all. Indeed she was at this time absorbed in a great work for which she was making preparations, and for which she was amassing numerous studies. This work took up all her time and left her hardly an occasion to paint small canvases as a means of diverting her thoughts from her great undertaking. It was

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The Horse Fair — Bonheur

called the *Marché aux Chevaux,* known in England as the *Horse Fair.* The picture was exhibited at the Salon of 1853. The merits of this picture—the largest canvas which any animal painter had ever produced—in which the horses, although painted but two-thirds the real size strike the eye as of natural size, were violently discussed, as is the fate of all high-class works. But the adverse criticism of detractors was lost amid the enthusiastic praises of the young artist's admirers. The success of this work was wonderful, and Mademoiselle Bonheur, having been awarded all the honours of the Salon, her works were now, by special decision, declared henceforth exempt from examination by the Jury of Admission. This exceptional honour was a very high tribute to the artist's talent. When Napoleon III. saw this picture he admired it very much and desired to possess it. The Ministre des Beaux-Arts endeavoured to come to terms with Mademoiselle Bonheur for the purchase of the picture; but the sum he offered was far below what the artist expected. His interview with Rosa Bonheur was therefore fruitless, and the picture remained in the hands of the painter.

The *Horse Fair* was sent some time after to the Exhibition at Ghent, where it proved no less successful than it had been at Paris. The citizens of Ghent, wishing to show their gratitude to the artist for the loan of her work, made her a present of a magnificent cameo engraved after the picture itself.

When the Exhibition of Ghent was closed Mademoiselle

Bonheur was about to arrange for the canvas to be brought back to Paris, to her new *atelier* in the Rue d'Assas, where she had recently installed herself, when a foreign dealer in pictures, Mr. Gambart, called upon her with a view of its purchase. Terms were quickly agreed upon, and Mr. Gambart thus became the owner of this important work. He first took it to England and afterwards to America where he sold it to a very wealthy collector. The *Horse Fair* is now in the Museum of New York. Rosa Bonheur, at the request of Mr. Gambart, painted two replicas of her picture, one of which is at the present time in the National Gallery of London.

The *Horse Fair* is so universally known that we can almost say that it has been seen by everybody—at least in some form of reproduction. The magnificent stallions with their powerful forms pass before us at a trot, kicking up the dust under their feet. When Mademoiselle Bonheur humorously styled this work her " Parthenon frieze," she little dreamt that her contemporaries would so completely endorse this appellation, which she herself used somewhat ironically. Surely enough, this work may justly be called the modern " Parthenon frieze," full of life and movement and thoroughly imbued with realism—but of a beautiful and noble realism. The composition of the *Horse Fair* is admirable, and brings out finely the energy and spirit of the horse. The scene represents the horses as having just reached the market, and as being in the act of falling back to re-form for their proper places. The fine trees in the background of

the picture, and under which upon a rising ground, the dealers and buyers take up their position, are obscured on the left by the haze and by the clouds of dust raised by the trotting horses; in the background, too, but completely to the left, is seen the small dome of the Salpêtrière. The *Marché aux Chevaux* of Paris was at that time situate in the Boulevard de l'Hôpital, not far from the Orleans Railway; but in consequence of changes wrought by municipal authorities and of improvements, the market has lost the picturesque aspect it wore in 1853. One looks in vain now for the large trees which then shadowed it, and the bald earth, covered in places by short dusty grass, and broken up by the trampling of horses.

Although in most of her subjects Mademoiselle Bonheur allows herself to be guided almost solely by her imagination, and employs but little those contrivances for the balancing of lines and for producing harmonious arrangements in which certain artists have shown so much skill; although almost all her pictures may be described as pre-eminently spontaneous productions, she does not ignore the laws of composition; she observes them instinctively. Aiming above all at agreeable naturalness and simplicity in her subjects, she unites with this, when necessary, all the resources of a deep knowledge of the art of composition, which she knows well how to conceal. This perfect mingling of art and of truth is very obvious in the *Horse Fair*. The irregular order of the horses, their different movements bringing into play all their muscles; the different spots of their coats, so disposed

as to set off one another, and furnishing at the same time a charming variety to the eye; the powerful dappled Perche horses, which pass in the foreground and constitute the centre of the picture, with the groups of black and white horses which rear themselves upon their hind feet,—all this shows a profoundly skilful arrangement and results in a grand and harmonious *ensemble;* yet the first impression which this picture gives is that of a scene taken from the life and of intense realism. The freedom and breadth of the execution are equal to the beauty of the composition. The vigorous touch and the powerful drawing also help to give this picture a spirited character and masculine vigour in perfect harmony with the subject it represents. The *Horse Fair of Paris* is perhaps the best-known and most popular animal-picture of our epoch.

SAINTE GENEVIEVE MARKED WITH THE DIVINE SEAL

(*Puvis de Chavannes*)

CLAUDE PHILLIPS

PUVIS DE CHAVANNES was born at Lyons on the 14th December, 1824, and was in succession the pupil of Ary Scheffer and of Couture. He first exhibited in Paris about the year 1854, at one of the minor galleries, the doors of the Salon being then closed to him as they were to Gustave Courbet and to many other painters who have since won the highest renown.

He must be judged chiefly by the grand decorative works of his maturity, and from these there may be specially singled out for notice: the great series of designs, *Le Repos, Le Travail, La Paix, La Guerre,* and *Picardia,* all now in the Musée de la Picardie at Amiens; the series of frescoes at the Panthéon illustrative of the early life of St. Geneviève; the great Ludus pro Patria, also painted for Amiens; and the grand decoration *Le Bois Sacré Cher aux Arts et aux Muses.* These are perhaps his greatest and most complete achievements, and may be taken as most representative of his manner and mode of thought. The cycle of design at Amiens is one of the most important and original decorative works executed by a modern painter. It is a painted epic of humanity, in which are set forth with perfect simplicity and

directness, yet with ideal grandeur and the largest generalisation, four great phases of human life.

Le Repos (executed in 1864) shows as its main group an old man, who, seated on a mound overshadowed by a willow on the margin of a lake, declaims verses to an intently listening group. Beyond, in the near distance, is a second group, composed of shepherds and women who watch a little child essaying its first footsteps. In the background is a prospect of richly wooded mountains. *Le Travail* (executed in 1864) shows four different groups. In the foreground, wood-cutters are seen chopping tree-trunks; in the middle distance is the main group of five herculean male figures working at an anvil; beyond is a labourer, and to the right in the foreground appears a woman, lying on a couch of fern, to whom another older woman presents a new-born infant; the background shows the ocean fringed with rocks. It would be impossible to present more vividly, or with more sympathy, and breadth of conception and style, the great phases of human labour here realised in the most direct and natural fashion, without any of the cumbrous machinery of allegories and personifications for which this and the companion subjects might easily have furnished a pretext. *La Paix* (executed in 1861) is an idyll of heroic conception and proportions. In the foreground, grouped around a large oleander tree close upon the banks of a running stream, are seen in various attitudes young warriors, big-limbed and long-haired, some nude and some half-draped and wearing their arms.. A woman, over whom bends a shepherd clad

Sainte Geneviève Marked with the Divine Seal
Puvis de Chavannes

in leopard-skins, milks a goat, while another undraped female figure offers a basket piled high with grapes to a young man who sits on the edge of the stream. In the background are youths engaged in friendly contest on horseback and on foot, and beyond, closing in the picture on either side, are steep rocks, clothed half way with rich verdure, between which appears, walled in by them, a narrow, winding valley. All here breathes calm, security and happiness without alloy, yet pure and untainted, and without a taint of orgy or sensuality—*La Guerre* (executed in 1861) is, both in its scheme of colour and conception, in complete contrast with the companion pictures. Female captives are seen crouching near the shattered trunk of a tree, and in another group two old men lament over the corpses of their slaughtered children while, apart, a man struggles in the throes of the death-agony, and two exhausted oxen, stretched on the ground, breathe their last: beyond, three mounted warriors sound an alarm. The *Picardia* is, as beseems the subject, conceived in a homelier and less exalted, yet equally poetic and comprehensive spirit. It is an embodiment of the industries and attributes of the province of Picardy, realised by their actual presentment in a simplified and typical form: the whole as usual framed in a landscape of superb breadth and beauty.

The crowning achievement of the painter must however be deemed the series of frescoes at the Panthéon (completed in 1877) illustrating the early youth of the patron saint of Paris, St. Geneviève. It is here especially that M. Puvis de Chavannes reveals himself as a master of decorative art,

and a creative artist capable of grappling with the most elevated themes in a spirit worthy of them, and of rendering them with the noblest pathos and simplicity. These frescoes represent, in three divisions separated by the half pillars which project from the walls of the church, scenes from the childhood of the Saint. In the first, she kneels a little child clad in a simple drapery of white, absorbed in adoration before a rude cross which she has fixed to the trunk of a tree. The two other divisions form in reality one subject only. In the larger, the Bishops St. Germain of Auxerre, and St. Loup of Troyes, journeying on their way to England, there to combat the Pelasgian heresy, have arrived in the environs of Nanterre; among the devout crowd of men, women and children who have come to meet them is the child, Geneviève. St. Germain, with whom is St. Loup, stands in the centre of the picture, his right hand placed in benediction on her head. She looks up to him with reverential yet composed mien. Round about the central group, clad in draperies of simple line and fold, kneel women who have brought forward their women to pray, some with faces upturned in devout contemplation, some bowed and absorbed in prayer. Beyond is a landscape of the most peaceful beauty; farther still is a walled town of primitive aspect. In the last division is seen a boat manned by four semi-nude figures, on which the bishops are about to embark, while in the middle distance the figure of a sick person, supported by two men, emerges from a hut to invoke relief from the healing powers of the holy men. The whole work is highly

typical of the painter and exhibits in a marked form his best qualities, and also, it must be said, the drawbacks which to a certain extent explain the criticism to which he has been subjected. The execution is, technically speaking, broad, simple and direct, as befits work of this type. The colouring must be pronounced, of its peculiar kind, exquisitely well balanced and harmonious, if once we admit the painter's scheme, which is to eschew as much as possible the contrast and relief afforded by opposing masses of light and shade, and to give to his subjects a gentle, even and wide spread illumination. Combined with masses of white and with flesh tones delicate and wan in tint, the painter employs with extraordinary skill and effect all shades of blue and its kindred tones, from the deepest violet to the palest lilac, using red and hues akin to it only in a modified and deadened form, shorn of their full splendour, and as a rule not in large masses. Few will be found to deny the mastery with which he combines these elements, and obtains from them their fullest and most legitimate effect. The landscape backgrounds, which constitute so essential a part of his works, are unsurpassed for simple majesty of line, harmony of colour, and pathetic suggestiveness, and above all for the way in which they are indissolubly linked to the scenes which they frame and complete. In the work now under consideration nothing could be more harmonious or grouped with more exquisite art than the central composition just described. Here any too prominent display of science would have been obtrusive and out of place; the impression of holy calm and

peace which it was sought to convey would have been destroyed. The painter has, however, succeeded in composing his groups with such perfect yet well-dissembled skill that no thought of effort or of artifice enters the mind of the spectator.

In the drawing, here as elsewhere in most of his later and more representative works, the painter has, so far as can be judged from a comparison of his studies with his finished designs, deliberately eliminated all detail in the delineation of facial expression, in the representation of the human form, and even in the folds and adjustments of the draperies, which according to his view, would detract from the epic breadth and generalised character of his creations, and impart to them an aspect too realistic and too individual. In this process of generalisation, results are certainly often attained which are akin to defective, or rather to insufficient, drawing, especially in the rendering of the human form; and it is this which has caused it to be said and often repeated that M. Puvis de Chavannes can not draw, and has adopted his present system to hide deficiencies of training, though some of the works at Amiens are the best proof to the contrary. The series of drawings by the master shown at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts must surely have given the *coup de grace* to this theory. These magnificent studies, for the most part executed in *sanguine,* are admirably correct and harmonious in line, and show a breadth and splendour of style such as we are accustomed to meet with only in the finest drawings of the early maturity of the Italian Renaissance. Studies from

the nude amply suffice to show the noble harmony of line combined with perfect truth and vitality, which marks the painter's style of draughtsmanship. Apart from the technical question (which, however, especially in art of such aim and pretensions, is of the highest importance) although the effects realised by the process above described are often in their ultra-simplicity profoundly impressive, it must be owned that there is much matter for regret in this persistency in carrying to an extreme point the generalised rendering of the human face and form, the result being to impart to them an impersonal character, which, even in subjects such as those chosen by M. Puvis de Chavannes, robs them of half their significance and charm, and can not be deemed essential to the due expression of the painter's intentions. The result, too, is sometimes an appearance of studied archaism, a seeming imitation of the sublime but primitive art of Giotto and his followers, of which the painter is himself unconscious, but which detracts from the high position his works should take as original creations of elevated type and purpose. Raphael in the Stanze of the Vatican, and Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel, in works the most vastly comprehensive, the most abstract in conception that the world has seen, and yet the most essentially human, because they portray what is most noble and enduring in humanity, have proved once and for ever that such a system pushed to its extreme limits is not a necessary element in the exposition of the vastest and most exalted themes. They have shown that the most marked individuality in the types represented

and the highest technical perfection and finish do not detract from, but add to the grandeur and lofty simplicity indispensable for the adequate treatment of such subjects.

The art of M. Puvis de Chavannes, though in his imaginative designs he has never approached purely modern subjects, and indeed but rarely (as in the Panthéon frescoes) any which can be said to belong to a special time or place, is yet in no sense distinctly modern: he is a painter-poet of a temperament such as only his century could have produced, and most of all in the element of peculiar melancholy which he often unconsciously infuses even into his most abstract conceptions. The quality is with him the result of the broad human sympathies which form the basis of his artistic nature. His pathetic power, though it is the outcome of his time, is yet distinctly his own; it has neither the tragic intensity of Jean François Millet, nor on the other hand has it any thing in common with the languorous despair and want of real kinship with humanity which marks the works of Burne-Jones and his school. It is melancholy of a quality which does not shut out hope, and consorts well with the painter's true ideality and noble aspirations.

Like many other innovators, who, feeling they have something to say, choose to say it in a strange and unfamiliar way, M. Puvis de Chavannes was at the commencement of his artistic career derived as a fantastic visionary of a mild type, to whom on account of the comparatively innocuous nature of his productions a certain amount of contemptuous toleration was to be accorded. Recalling the career of other and

even greater men than he: Eugène Delacroix, detested and persecuted by Ingres and his followers; Millet, whose sublime types were in his earlier time deemed rude, coarse and uncouth; and Corot, who at one time could not even obtain for his landscapes access to the Salon; M. Puvis de Chavannes has, however, persevered, serenely undaunted, nay even perhaps too little affected by genuine criticism. To-day in face of the magnificant works with which he has enriched France, the painter is on too high a pedestal for criticism of the merely contemptuous kind, and his critics are accordingly compelled to take up a different position. None now attempt entirely to deny his immense talent and pre-eminence in decorative art, nor the loftiness and simplicity of his conceptions. But other means of attack must be found; for is he not, with Messrs. Baudry, Jules Lefebvre and a few others, the chief and most imposing barrier to the inrushing tide of realism, which, no longer content to occupy its proper and legitimate place in the fields of genre, portrait and landscape would now invade the precincts of the highest decorative art. A well-known Parisian critic has recently, in noticing the *Bois Sacré,* delivered himself somewhat to the following effect. "We recognise his great ability as a designer and colourist, but he seeks here to represent what he has never seen, and what we, the inhabitants of France, and not of the Vale of Tempe, neither want any longer nor understand. We ask for something newer and more modern in type and conception, more completely in sympathy with our humanity of to-day and its wants."

Such a theory might have its weight as applied to genre, landscape, and even to historical subjects, but surely, as applied to the highest decorative and ideal art, it contains a fallacy as huge as can be conceived. All true art—especially the highest—must doubtless be based and built on nature; but must it not also proceed, if it lay claim to the name of art, by way of selection, by searching out in nature its noblest, truest and most essential elements, while neglecting such as from their merely accidental and temporary nature are unworthy of being perpetuated? Is not this the way in which the greatest masters of decorative art, Giotto, Ghirlandajo, Michelangelo, and Raphael proceeded? And would not the world have been poorer by its greatest treasures—the Frescoes of Assisi, the Sistine Chapel, the Cartoons and the Stanze of the Vatican—if these, the great pioneers of art, who studied humanity and nature with a closeness and an ardent sympathy never to be surpassed, had proceeded to represent only the accidental realities and merely outward appearances of the every-day world, as it appeared to the indifferent and the uninitiated? Is there not in the conceptions of the great men whom we have just cited, and of those who follow in their footsteps, a wider and more real sympathy, a truer reflection of humanity in all that is most lasting and essential, than can be afforded by the representation of subjects which may for the present age have a certain meaning, but to other generations can have little or none?

As it is, his accomplished work is perhaps the highest, if hardly the most complete, manifestation of the art of modern

France. He must take rank with the greatest painters of this century, as one who has achieved great and lasting things, whose aims have always been lofty and noble and who has borne high the banner of the ideal and the essentially true at a time when the opposition was most powerful, and the danger most pressing.

L' EMBOUCHURE DE L'ESCAUT

(*Alfred Verwée*)

CAMILLE LEMONNIER

SOME artists have preserved in its integrity their belief in that beautiful, warm and luxuriant colour which has been from time immemorial the leading characteristic of the Flemish painters. In the first rank, stands Alfred Verwée, who acquired fame at his *début* in 1863 with a vigorous canvas representing *Animaux en prairie.* A *Verger,* which he exhibited at the Salon of 1866, confirmed the hopes which his first attempt had engendered; and, in 1869, the rich flower of his talent blossomed in the *Etalon.*

From this moment, his path was cut out—he never departed from it. The *Récolte dans le Nord de la Flandre* (1872), the *Attelage Zélandais,* the *Bords de l'Escaut,* the *Prairie aux Coquelicots* (1875), the *Chevaux* and *Environs d'Ostende* (1878), each better than the last, led to that masterpiece the *Embouchure de l'Escaut,* which, at the Salon in Paris of 1879, so greatly impressed the French artists, and which was one of the great attractions at the Brussels Exposition.

This was because the artist, in representing the Flemish country, knew how to fix the sensation of luxuriant materiality and robust animality that arises from that soil that is kept in perpetual verdure by the humidity of the atmos-

L'Embouchure de l' Escaut Verwée

phere. He had expressed its fertility, its generous saps and its effervescence in intense colour, in which were accorded the lights of the sky, the shining coats of the animals and the greenish shadows of the ground. What dominated here was health prodigal to exuberance, the taste and search for power, the aptitude for painting the fat, sleepy lives of the beasts, a rich instinct at its ease in a solid and well-nourished use of the brush, and still more a sensitiveness of the eye reflecting like a mirror the infinite variety of the tones, the faculty of expressing reality from a special angle through the coloured mirage of the brain, and lastly the sensuality of a worker putting into his execution that caress which gives the vibration and electricity of life to natural objects.

Alfred Verwée is one of the most splendid artistic organisations of the present day; he delights in giving the impression of a soil full of juice and vastly nutritious; in his work, we feel the perpetual rejuvenation of the world, the renewal of creation, and the inexhaustible fecundity of land fed with fluvial filtration. His vision is that of a Fleming hatched by a German mind. We gain from his canvases an impression of physical and moral health that affords the special flavour of Flanders more truly than he has been able to mix it into his pigments. He has a tranquil and strong temperament, a contemplation that is never feverish, and the activity of the people of his race; and these characteristics are reflected in an abundant and sustained execution on which lassitude has no hold.

The extension effected by Joseph Stevens in animal paint-

ing proper, was in landscape painting in which animals have an important place. With him, the animal world does not play a secondary rôle, as in the idyls of the successors of Ommeganck, nor a distinctive rôle, as in the more sympathetic works of Louis Robbe; it forms an integral part of the rusticity which surrounds it; it seems to be a spontaneous product and an almost immediate formation of the earth. We feel that it is the energies of the latter that have communicated to it its beautiful red flower of life, and its magnificent form and colour. The artist has therefore painted his country as he saw it, rich in pasturage and consequently in cattle, under its double aspect of meadow and animal, amid agitated and whirling skies, greens gleaming with the wash of heavy rains, and darkened earth the colour of burnt coffee, weighted with the density of the atmosphere.

Masters like Dubois and Verwée are in direct relation with the instinct of the race. I may compare them to cows in the field, nourished with the juices of the earth. Alfred Verwée, with his fine eyes intoxicated with the flowery beauty of the meadows and the balanced curves of the great clouds passing like silver barges across the wide skies of Flanders, was indeed in all his power an optical painter. This he was with all the magic that results from such inconparable gifts as spontaneity and abundant nervous afflux, sensibility of the optic nerves, exaltation of the feeling for colour and luminous perception. The image resounded in his mind, vibrant and sonorous, animated by the mobile life

imparted to it by the waves of light. Scarcely was this felt, when it expressed itself in its colour form with a material density and fullness of tone which were the essential rhythms of this healthy and vigorous art, sparing of too subtle aims.

It was nearly always, amid the intense and lustrous green of the lush Flemish meadows, refreshed by frequent showers and half steaming, the broad mass of the gold-flecked bull, with flanks the colour of warm autumn, or the tanned whites of the heifer, the bluish blacks of the milch cow with heavily weighted udders. An oily gloss, the fluid of a soil richer in chyle than any other, shone on that blooming flesh, on those hearts and petals of an animal flower which, as well as bouquets, shed its leaves in the gardens of light and life. Fluids and humid airs bathed them, warmed in a soft and brilliant light, that light falling between two clouds in which the sun seems to be dissolving into argent liquid, into rich baryta white, which was the favourite of this great painter who was so saturated with the intimate and mysterious virtues of the mother earth.

After having tarried for a short time, in the early period of his career, with the muted greys that then ruled the common attempts of artists, Verwée found the manner which best suited his expansive temperament as a colourist and scarcely ever afterwards ceased to paint landscapes that were enveloped by a broad flood of tempered light, wonderfully suggestive of the grave and tranquil magic of the Flemish sky. It passed over his canvases like a river of gold and

silver, full of breath of those marine stretches that we always feel at the other end of his pasturages. It gained for him at once strength and delicacy of tone, strong and velvety values and the splendid harmony of animal form with field ornament. Sometimes, lining the banks of a red border, a long ray extends and shines, bringing out the light vermillion of the roofs of a hamlet and lighting up the green herbage with furtive coruscations. Elsewhere, the cold, pewter tone of a river gleams at the foot of a mass of architectural clouds. This is the usual symmetry of his landscapes; it has sufficed for him to express the forces of nature; an idea of eternity is evolved from the inexhaustible reservoirs of life at which the flock is feeding here. We are in the primordial and infinite genesis.

Alfred Verwée, through these sensations of power and lastingness, communicated with great force the emotion of pastoral Flanders. He painted it with an intoxicated and Pantheistic soul for which the earth was the universal matrix, the sacred alembic of forms. He painted it especially with a Flemish soul, inexpressibly open to the special impressions which are produced by a land of high winds and big rivers under spacious skies where the light is concentrated like a glance between eyelids gently thoughtful. The wide sea breeze is the host of these latitudes, toning the atmosphere and impressing it with an active and sonorous life. Under its rough breath, the undulous green plain moves like watered silk, like a Golconda of prase and emeralds. The charm of this great mastery lies in not separating its poetry from its

reality, but rather in mingling them in one definitive and magnificent expression. Verwée in nature history will remain the poet of happy force. I intentionally join these two words which seem to me to summarise the intimate characteristics of his virile and original talent.

AU CAFE

(Edouard Manet)

CAMILLE MAUCLAIR

THE work of Manet is extensive. Each of his principal pictures raised a storm of criticism, and to speak of them is like dating battles. Few painters have been so versatile. This man touched everything; pictures of style, genre subjects, still-life, portraits, seascapes, etchings, pastels: in each of these departments he has left evidences of a rare power. He possessed an almost incredible ability, and this ability was honest, entirely without trick or artifice. He took the light and shadow and let them play logically upon his subjects and his figures with an insight free from all myopia, and a turn of hand and spirit that was broad and happy. This is what good painters call the *bel oeil.* He had the gift of generous vision just as certain *virtuosi* have the gift of uttering pointed and sonorous platitudes, and his art was as joyous, frank and keenly sensitive as he was himself, this man of generous heart and lofty soul, of healthy mind and cordial fellowship. Every one who knew Edouard Manet personally has preserved a keen recollection of the perfect harmony existing between his pure and lofty work, free from every taint of meanness and the man and the friend courteous and loyal, such as he was even at the most discouraging moments of his career.

Au Café Manet

Manet was not altogether without the good fortune to possess admirers and brothers-in-arms. Delacroix and Baudelaire, at the time of his first appearance (1861), hailed with admiration *Le Buveur d'Absinthe,* the *Guitarero*—fine as a Frans Hals—and the portraits of M. and Madame Manet, so astonishing for their life, their light and frank simplicity. A little later our artist first definitely experienced the spite of the official juries which it is impossible now to forgive. His canvases, the *Bain,* the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe,* and the *Fifre,* were rejected at the Salon, and the celebrated Salon des Refusés of 1864 was opened, where the crowd went and laughed, though the Emperor Napoleon III. condescended to visit it, to the great scandal of the Académie des Beaux-Arts. In this " Assembly of the Accursed " there were represented some artists of the very first rank, such as the engraver Bracquemond; the Dutch painter Jongkind, who has left such perfect paintings and such fascinating water-colours; Alphonse Legros, disowned in France but justly welcomed and admired in England; Eugène Lavicille the painter of still night, of dark waters and of autumn; and lastly, James MacNeill Whistler, one of the century's great artists. These men, grouped together by the disapproval of the ignorant, became inseparable friends, and Manet's influence commenced. Other men of courage and talent joined the band, Fantin-Latour, the idyllic and Wagnerian artist; Stéphane Mallarmé, eccentric, genial and profound, another who bore memorably in due time the burden of a haughty and solitary originality; and the enchanting

and brilliant Théodore de Banville. Such were the first friends of Manet; the Impressionist School was not to arrive until later.

The year 1865 witnessed, with the picture *Olympia,* a torrent of abuse let loose upon its creator. This picture is probably his master-piece. Baudelaire wrote to him: "You are only the first to attack the decrepitude of your art, but you are the first." The sagacious and admirable philosopher of beauty saw clearly, but he was alone in his opinion. The *Anges au Tombeau du Christ* and the *Combat de Taureaux,* to-day famous and universally admired, were assailed with abuse and execration, there were even some who wanted to tear the canvases while on exhibition. The superb portrait in black of the tragedian, Rouvière, is one of the finest symphonies in black that Art has seen since Goya met with a similar reception. Manet withdrew from the Salons, and worked on. The literary movement grew simultaneously with his own. Emile Zola and de Goncourt published their best books, Flaubert and Baudelaire began to take their rank amongst the masters of the French language, and slowly the new art built itself up upon the decrepitude of the old. In 1867 Manet opened to the public his studio in the Avenue de l'Alma. Fifty canvases were on view there, of which some are famous. Near the *Fifre* were to be seen the *Déjeuner,* the *Toreador tué,* the *Enfant à l'Epée,* the *Musique aux Tuileries,* the *Christ insultè* and other works of high importance. There were the *Combat du Kearsarge et de l'Alabama,* with its furiously dramatic impression of

sea; the portraits of *Madame Eva Gonzalés* and of *Madame Berthe Morisot,* the *Fumeur* and marine and still-life subjects, any single one of which would have made the pride of the life work of a specialist. Lastly, there were those terrible studies of the barricades, and that *Mort de l'Empereur Maximilian,* which latter remains one of the finest pieces of historical painting of the Nineteenth Century.

In all this work there shone an indisputable talent that was new and complete. Manet showed himself a painter of portraits possessing all the fine intellectual quality of the traditional French School, such as La Tour possessed, and from this point of view the portrait in white of Mademoiselle Morisot (afterwards his sister-in-law Madame Eugène Manet), was a masterpiece of subtle grace and of elegant and unaffected femininity. After this exhibition, he who had hitherto been known as the painter of Spanish life, with an art quite his own, though bearing traces of Goya's influence, and respecting Velasquez without imitating even him, abandoned interiors, and the light of the studio and brightened his palette; and, adopting entirely new subjects, drawing and methods, set out to attempt the great endeavour of his life, that which has been named *le plein air.* His exhibition of 1867 thus closes the first part of Manet's artistic career. Hitherto he had been captivated by the art of Spain, and had tried to introduce it into France, and to employ in other subjects the violent manner and warm and sombre colour of this school. He had painted bull-fights, *pietas,* interiors; a few portraits and seascapes marked the turning-

point, and from henceforth he determined to abandon the harsh and tragic style and to turn his attention to the sweetness and magic of the effects of light.

Le Jardin, in blue and pink, the *Joueuse de Mandoline,* the *Café Concert,* and various landscapes, inaugurated Manet's new manner. Here were to be seen the palpitation of light among the leaves, or its play upon flesh and drapery, the study of transparency, the iridescence of colours, the reflections of sky upon objects, with extraordinary invention and freshness; all these things were produced in a few months.

Around Manet there now began to spring up many young and enthusiastic personalities. The first was a young lady, afterwards his brother's wife, Mademoiselle Berthe Morisot (died March, 1895), who painted landscapes and portraits with a luminous sense of colour; then Mademoiselle Eva Gonzalés, afterwards Madame Henri Guérard; the engraver Guérard himself, and, finally, the first among our living painters Camille Pissarro; Sisley, the original and powerful synthetist, Paul Cézanne; the fascinating and charming Rénoir; Miss Mary Cassatt, the American; Gustave Caillebotte, whose legacy to the Luxembourg has made so much stir; and, most incisive of all, the painter of *danseuses* and the creator of irony in contemporary art, Edgar Degas. One of the later comers, Claude Monet, exhibited at the Salon a landscape entitled *Impressions,* and the general ridicule that it aroused brought down on the band the title of " Impressionists." Both the man and the title, then

branded with contempt, were destined to mount high and to go far. The group became definitely constituted by pure sympathy and in all freedom. The new art, the most brilliant manifestation of the art of the Nineteenth Century since Delacroix and Corot, was born, and from these few men everything was to proceed.

Stilled for a moment by the success of *Bon Bock,* which is only a fine piece, but not one of his best, the battle waxed hotter over the *Canotiers d'Argenteuil,* the portrait of the engraver *Desboutins,* the portrait of the singer *Faure as Hamlet,* and the admirable *Nana.* The portrait of *M. Antonin Proust* and *Chez le Père Lathuille,* were exhibited and ridiculed together. This last canvas, depicting a scene in a Parisian restaurant, is not, in spite of the general opinion of artists, one of Manet's best things; but, on the other hand, *Nana* takes its place with the *Toreador tué, Olympia,* the *Jardin,* the *Port de Boulogne* and the portrait of *Madame Morisot* as a masterpiece. His fame increased; the execration that the critics poured out on him failed to make any impression. At the Salon of 1881, in spite of the fury of certain members of the jury, the majority decided to medal his life-like and powerful portrait of M. Henri Rochefort. In December Manet was decorated and became the chief of the School. Claude Monet, Pissarro, Degas, Cézanne, and Rénoir exhibited separately, he remained apart continuing his work. The Salon of 1882 contained the additional works, the *Printemps* and the *Bar,* perfect creations of light and harmony. But disease was already lying in wait for

him, and on the eve of the opening of the 1883 Salon, April the 30th, this great and indomitable man was dead. With his death was extinguished a genuine glory, which no one will wish to deny to him, the example of an unwearied perception and a life of incessant work and creation.

THE LADY WITH THE GLOVE

(*Carolus-Duran*)

ARSÉNE ALEXANDRE

CAROLUS-DURAN was born in Lille in 1838. His paternal grandfather was of Spanish origin, which to a certain extent explains from the beginning both his facial type and his art affinities.

His first studies in the Lille municipal school soon aroused a taste for drawing. But his attempts were in danger of being irremediably dashed by the lack of clairvoyance shown by his first professor. Happily the scholar had the good fortune to meet a Lille painter, Souchon, who encouraged and helped him. With the aid of others, Souchon obtained a city pension for him in 1859; and the young man set out for Paris with an eagerness that may be imagined. But at the end of two years, in 1861, the pension was dis-

*The Luxembourg also contains his celebrated *La Dame au Gant*, one of his early portraits, exhibited in 1869, and which obtained a medal at the time there was but one medal and no classification of medals. The figure is life-sized and dressed in the abundant crinoline of the day. In spite of the crinoline, the pose and sweep of the figure are very fine and impressive. In taking off her gloves, one has fallen to the ground, whence the name of the picture. It is a model of style and defines the word.—*D. Cady Eaton, A Handbook of Modern French Painting* (New York, 1909).

continued. More than once the young painter walked dinnerless in the Luxembourg gardens, where he now walks, with his pupils or friends, sometimes pensive, sometimes gay, always equable in humour, and courteous and high-minded in conversation. In the old days the companions whom he joined on the terrace of some *café,* never suspected that his stomach was empty, and that things looked black to him.

During this first sojourn in Paris, Carolus-Duran assiduously frequented the Louvre, but did not go to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. He did not have a master. The only studio, from the necessity of working somewhere and having models, was the Académie Suisse, where he became acquainted with Fantin-Latour. Thus, from the very beginning, the artist was placed in perfect independence, not systematically or out of bravado, for no one has more admiration and respect for beautiful things than he has, but because of free and proud temperament. He did not want to owe his acquisitions to anybody but himself. That is not always the most direct road to success; and it explains why so many others who are not so brave, prefer the well-beaten paths.

In 1860, Carolus-Duran took part in the Wicar competition at Lille. He took the prize with the *Visite au convalescent,* a very important work, comprising several figures, which he afterwards destroyed on one of those days of doubt and discontent that correspond so little with the old legends.

The travelling money which Carolus-Duran obtained from this enabled him to take the road to Italy about 1862. Of course, he stopped at Rome, but did not stay there. It

The Lady with the Glove *Carolus-Duran*

is still his habit to make his own *École de Rome*. He cloistered himself in the monastery of Subiaco in the environs of the Eternal City. The months he spent at Subiaco were most terrible for the artist and the man, for they were a mixture of exaltation and despair which is sufficiently explained by the secluded life, the separation from Paris, the absolute uncertainty of the future, the beauty of the region, alternating with the depressing and sombre monotony of heavy, terrible and interminable rains during which nature and life seemed for ever condemned to grey, and above all this the emotions produced on a nervous temperament and lively sensibility by the immediate contact of religious life.

In 1866, Carolus-Duran returned to Paris, where he found life harder and the future more uncertain than ever. It came to such a pass that he was forced for a time to go to live at Lille, and content himself with painting some portraits at a hundred and fifty francs apiece.

But a piece of good fortune, if such we may call it, at last fell to him. In the interval, he had painted and exhibited his great picture *L'Assassiné*. It is undeniably a work that takes its place among the most important pictures of the French School of the Nineteenth Century. *L'Assassiné* was sold and this is what constituted the 'good fortune' we spoke of: the offer was for five thousand francs. Yes, indeed, good fortune is bitterly ironical. But, after all, the event transformed this slight windfall into a first prize of the possession of a road to follow, success, and consequently fortune itself.

That sum not assuring life in Paris for the artist very long, he set out for Spain. It may be said that from that moment no man was richer than he, since his talent was going to be transformed, his true personality to assert itself, and Velasquez to be revealed to him!

Carolus-Duran, with his instinct of an artist and of distant descent, spent his time almost exclusively in the presence of the painter of Philip IV. The important matter is that he made no mistake in the choice of his real master. He studied him to the depths and copied his works for at least a year with rare ardour of assimilation. In this practice, the talent of our painter gained an ease and richness which before was lacking, and Velasquez was profitable to him especially in the revelation of that great principle of *sacrifices* in the way of expressing oneself.

Even to-day (one might say even with much greater reason, since, when one has once started along that road there is no turning back) one of the favourite aphorisms of Mr. Carolus-Duran is that "in art, everything that is not indispensable is hurtful." And he added, "My aim has always been this: to express the maximum by means of the minimum."

Certainly if a master responds to this definition and has triumphed in this enterprise wherein so many artists fail, and where so many others believe they will succeed, it is due, *par excellence,* to Velasquez and the salutary influence that he exercised in this sense on him who studied him so devoutly and with such passion. This is seen by comparing

L'Assassiné with *La Dame au gant,* which was painted in 1869, that is to say after the master's return from Spain.

He lived there at Toledo for some time. He had a studio that was truly unique and romantic in character; nothing less than the convent of San Juan de los Reyes, that is to say, one of the saddest and most beautiful places in the world, dominating the rocky valley of the Tagus, from the same height that the spirit of the thinker dominates life, this vale of tears.

We have said that the first resounding work that signalised this transformation on his return was the *Dame au gant.* There is no need to describe nor to comment on that svelte and elegant figure whose execution is so strong and so simple, and whose costume, far from looking out of date like those works that owe their success to being in the fashion, has, on the contrary, assumed an astonishing style.

AFTER THE BALL

(*Alfred Stevens*)

CAMILLE LEMONNIER

WITH Alfred Stevens, the free personality of the artist comes on the stage; he owes nothing to tradition, and his art is the expression appropriate to one period and one mentality. The progressive emancipation of the school, still timid in Wappers, De Keyser, Wiertz, and Gallait, becomes resolute in Leys, and more and more broadened in Groux; the painter of modernity, *par excellence,* is about to characterise its complete emancipation. Just as a succession of geneses was needed to bring forth a Leys, a change in art conditions was necessary to produce Alfred Stevens That beautiful flower grew out of a bed that had long been prepared by the collective efforts of his predecessors, in conformity with the universal law of evolution.

In 1855, the tendency to paint contemporary life showed itself in him for the first time; in that year, he exhibited in the Antwerp Salon a little picture which he called *Chez Soi.* A woman is warming her feet at the fire; she has just come in; it is raining or snowing, and her white hands, her wind-bitten cheeks and red lips have a sweetness of wearied flesh that gives us a presentiment of the poet who closely studies woman.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

After the Ball — Stevens

He returned to his female subjects in 1857, when he exhibited a *Printemps,* a motive as charming and sweet as a prayer, and that visit of two women in mourning, called *Consolation,* which is so important among his works.

Henceforth, his way is fixed: the painter will not again depart from it. We find him again in the Salons of 1861, 1863, and 1864; but it is particularly in the Universal Exposition of 1867 that he shows himself in all his splendour and variety. He follows his period; he remains faithful to it in the choice of his subjects, and almost in the names of his pictures. *L'Inde en France* shows us the revolution in habits, tastes and feelings that had occurred with the new ideal that had taken possession of people's minds. *La Parisienne* contemplating an object of carved ivory, tells the passionate curiosity with which women plunged into the art of the knick-knack, so charming and so ruinous. A *Matinée à la campagne* is the *tête-à-tête* of two ladies sitting on a verandah. *Mlle. Fauvette* has almost the charm of a romance; with her amourous eyes and red lips, her slender silhouette reminds us of Murger's women. Then the *Visit* blossoms against the background of a screen arabesqued with gold, showing two fashionable ladies in conversation, one standing, wearing a hat and a wonderful cashmere shawl, the other sitting with downcast eyes. The *Peintre et son modèle* has represented himself squatting on a corner of the divan, cigarette in hand, while a woman in yellow stands before him trying various poses. Lastly, the *Rentrée du monde,* the

Dame en rose, Une Bonne Lettre, Fleurs d'automne, and *Confidence* were so many little masterpieces of colour and expression. And brusquely, a Virgin in a golden haze, chaste as Memling's maidens, the other *Printemps,* of the *Quatre Saisons* series, brought its unexpected contrast in among these dazzling women: it was the golden strophe of the poem of women; invisible mouths seemed to sigh around the Infant in accents of love and eternity, and the sky became silvery above its brow as if to halo it.

Two important pictures, *Le Bain* and *Le Masque Japonais,* revealed a new manner about this time.

His palette had become silvered with vaporous grey, like a pale dawn, and a blonde cloud formed the atmosphere in which the flesh of the woman bloomed. In *Le Bain* the transparency of the water gave some hints of the mystery of a beautiful body, whilst the weary pallid face emerged. Soon afterwards he painted the enigmatic beauty of her he called *Le Sphinx,* who, under the red fall of her fleecy boa, looks in fact like the triumph of the Inexorable Beast, the devourer of brains.

A store of such wealth increases in proportion as it produces. In fact, a youth, ever new, presided over every work of the painter; every time he thought and worked, he seemed to work and think for the first time; and the train of women to whom he gave life issued unceasingly from his brain without exhausting it. It is impossible here to follow the trail of this thick growth; I will merely recall the public amazement before the pictures exhibited at the Exposition Univer-

selle of 1878, and the four symbolic pictures of the *Saisons,* painted for the Palais Royal of Brussels.

Like all great painters, Alfred Stevens is prodigiously preoccupied with his execution: he loves fine masses of pigment and beautiful colours; and with each stroke of his brush he strikes an imprint as in a medal. He has proved that good painting is the result of a sensitive organization: the nerves communicating a vibration to the touch; the eye, the hand and the brain are stretched to such a point for the mysterious elaboration of tones that there is a picture in the space of a square centimeter; effort constantly recommences, and the slightest touch is an operation of the spirit, and a work of art is cut out bit by bit, like a delicate and complicated piece of goldsmith's work.

But the variety of the work of Alfred Stevens is not merely in the execution: he belongs to the small number of those who will serve in the future as intelligencers of the society of the present day. When the majority of the canvases of today are dumb regarding us, his art will tell of our weaknesses and our passions. In him you will always feel the thumbprint of the human artist: he relates his period as a moralist and a historian, and his conceptions are in direct accord with the modern spirit. He is as concise and clear as a book; he teaches; he warns; he is ideality grafted on reality; above all he is life.

Arthur Stevens, his brother, has formulated this judgment upon him: " He comprehends that originality does not dwell in a farce, something fantastic, or a subject of twenty figures,

but in the expression of a real and human sentiment. He knows that form should express the movements of the soul much more than the grimaces of a face."

The painter of the *Sphinx* knew how to guard against sentimentality. With him the idyl and the elegy are discrete; he derives his effects less from his subject than from the truth of expression and the tonality: his emotion must be sought through the colour and in the execution. Like men who themselves have suffered, this marvellous painter is also a poet of awakened humanity. He knows what ulcerated bonds unite the flesh with the soul, he evokes the sorrows, the melancholia, the concentrated joys and the heart's aspirations; he measures them with a fine, concentrated and truly human feeling. He paints grief without the tearful grimace: the spasm is internal. He has as much horror of excess of sentiment as of excessive stage setting and padding.

One sole personage occupies his stage,—woman; but there is no other beneath the sky that is more undulating, nor that is held by more ties to the destiny of men. She is like the heart of humanity, driving her deep shoots everywhere, at the same time tentacles by love and garlands by hatred. He has expressed her under every aspect; he has followed her through all her metamorphoses; he has painted her maternal or amorous, languid or irritated, proud or cast down, fallen from on high or raised from the depths; we may say that he has not in the least calumniated her. It is through her that we gain entrance to his work; and posterity will have no trouble in saying who we were, seeing these sickly and nervous beings, our affliction and our love.

A world of exquisite things accompanies her; as the sun draws the flowers from the bowels of the earth, her smile creates around her jewels, ornaments, rich stuffs, a whole blossoming of wonderful nothings in which her senses take delight. Sometimes, her whim demands from China, Japan and the distant regions of chimera, the dazzling futilities of her boudoirs and salons; sometimes, she imposes on Western craftsmen the task of twisting into curious forms the gold and other metals to serve as an accompaniment to her beauty. She is the fay of a moving paradise whose splendours leave her dissatisfied, ceaselessly in quest of new caprices; and this restlessness is reflected in the art with which she is mingled. Stevens logically painted her with her taste for the exotic knick-knack, among the what-nots loaded with ivory and bronze gods, against a background of lacquered screens stamped with fabulous animals.

His art then is quite complete, since, in an admirable plastic mode, he has succeeded in expressing permanent beauty and transitory beauty, the variability of the mind through the eternity of the flesh. Moreover, the Sphinx has not effeminated him. Like all virile intellects, he has resisted her charms and imposed his rule upon her. In fact, his women are delicate with solidity; in carving them in the marble of life, his strong hands have left to their contours a little of his own strength; instinctively he models them on his own soundness, his splendid health of an artist who has remained a Fleming in the midst of Parisian seductions; and so his women possess both strength and grace.

Alfred Stevens has created the most marvellous gallery of love and beauty; nobody before him had made of the female person the base and invention of an entire art, at once grave and sentimental, sensual and tender. He was the first to show woman in her relations with the century, an imperious and fragile ruler, such as she has been made by nature and our adoration. And a new notion of art rests on this novelty, —to defend the principle of modernity against the abuses of traditional painting.

THE NET MENDERS

(*Max Liebermann*)

A. E. LÜTTICKE

MAX LIEBERMANN is, without doubt, the first and most important representative of German impressionism and open-air painting, standing with Klinger and one or two others at the head of the younger generation of present-day German artists. Impressionism, which in the beginning was cried down as being a kind of mania for ugliness, becomes under the brush of this artist, the convincing expression of the most familiar scenes in nature and the world around. Since Liebermann first appeared in the art world, some thirty years since, he has perhaps been the most discussed of any artist, but it was long before his particular art was understood and appreciated. It was indeed so thoroughly at variance with what had been customary that it called forth a general outcry of indignation, which grew louder as the power and vigour of the young artist's work was instinctively felt. The result was that in defence of what had been down till then the ideal standard in art, the German public, led by the art-critics, condemned his work as impossible, and so for years his paintings were better known and appreciated abroad—more particularly in Paris—than in his own country. To-day this painter is recognised by most as the reviver of real art and one of the pioneers of its further

development, although there are still those who cavil at his work. Subject though he has been to many influences, there is always individuality in his art, his *forte* being decidedly the representing of humanity from its deepest and hardest side, the reproduction of clumsy, awkward positions of the toilers, and above all the suggestion of a movement which has either taken place or is to come. Like all Impressionists he loves light and atmospheric effects combined with simplicity, and has a total disregard for idealising.

Son of a rich manufacturer, Liebermann was born in Berlin on July 20, 1847. On leaving school in the year 1863, he entered the University by his father's wish, although, having shown a special talent for drawing, he had long desired to study art. However, he was not to be baulked, but following his own instincts he joined at first secretly, the Berlin Art Academy, and also attended classes at the Sleffecke Studios. About eighteen months later, his talent was recognised by his teachers and his father allowed him to follow his own inclination and devote his time solely to the study of art. At the age of twenty-one, he went to Weimar, attending the School of Art in that town until 1873; but during these early years, when he was under Thumann and Pauwels, his art was very little influenced by them, whereas later, the Belgian portrait and animal painter, Charles Verlat, made a deep impression on the young artist. Liebermann studied also under Munkaczy, Daubigny, Millet and Corot, spending a few years in Paris and Munich before finally returning to Berlin in the year 1884. Probably Mil-

The Net-Menders — Liebermann

let, Munkaczy and Courbet were the three masters who had the greatest influence on his art, the works of the two latter, exhibited in 1869, revealing that which he himself had long been striving to attain. A great admirer of Courbet's landscapes, which were termed commonplace by the multitude, and Munkaczy's religious scenes appealing to his artistic tastes, he began for the first time to feel interested in modern painting. A large work, produced about 1873, and later on purchased for the Berlin National Gallery, shows, perhaps, more than any other, the result of this influence. It represents a number of people plucking geese, and called forth at the time a perfect storm of indignation. Without any attempt at modifying the heavy, dull scene, or relieving the monotony produced by a group of poor folk sitting in a barn, occupied with their prosaic work, the artist depicted on the canvas an actuality which was grand in its conception, so true to nature, and showing life from its hard side. The dull, gloomy colouring also gave rise to comment, as defying all laws of tradition; neither the conception, the figures, with their heavy, expressionless faces, so true to life, nor the admirably calculated light, could save the work from condemnation. Liebermann was ahead of his time, and not understood. From this time he continued to portray life from its most prosaic and least interesting side. Making no attempt to give his realities an air of attractiveness or charm, but striving to produce impressions of the hardest side of life as he saw it, the result cannot often be said to be a pleasing picture; but true art lies in the manner in which the artist puts

these simple actualities on the canvas. While recovering from the effects of an accident, Liebermann spent days lying in the open air in the country, and often watched the peasants working in the fields, in the sunshine, and so it happened that, like a revelation, he felt drawn to studying this side of nature, and thus found what he had sought without knowing exactly what he wanted, and became a painter of actualities. At present he is, without doubt, one of the chief representatives of the Impressionist painters *en plein air*. Applying his talent to the study of Nature and all its movements, without heeding the aesthetic importance of scene or object, he endeavoured to reproduce every-day scenes as they appealed to him. Works such as the *Net-Menders,* purchased for the "Künsthalle" in Hamburg, and the *Woman with the Goats,* now in the Munich *Pinakothek,* both of them displaying a marvellous talent for observation and a rare sensitiveness for colour, alone place Liebermann at the head of modern German artists, and yet it has only been after a hard struggle that he has come out victorous, becoming one of the most influential among the Secessionists. In his work to-day, Liebermann is as full of youth and energy as at the beginning of his career, and may be said to have made for himself a historic position.

In 1873, he visited France and Holland, the stay in both countries proving significant for his art. Revelling in the artistic atmosphere of Paris, where he associated with Munkaczy, whose art attracted him, he was induced to make a long stay in that city, but it was really in Holland that he

found the most material for further development, discovering in the Dutch people and their country endless subjects for his brush; and so it came that he paid regular visits to Holland, collecting an abundance of impressions and ideas for work and study—in fact even now Liebermann spends a short time there every year, the Dutch landscape with its extending horizon, veiled in a soft, hazy atmosphere, having for him an attractive, homely beauty in harmony with the simplicity of the people.

A visit to Millet and his school of art in Barbizon made a lasting impression on Liebermann, and he learnt much from the French Impressionists, who he felt endeavoured to represent with their art not so much the particular objects, but their appearance under certain conditions of light and air; and also to reproduce the most fleeting movement in its own particular charm. Millet's influence is still observable, although blended with the effect of other teachings, in his work, which none the less bears absolutely the stamp of individuality, combining power of expression with the fundamental principles of the Impressionists, which, by making details subordinate to general impressions, and by stimulating the imagination of the onlooker, have succeeded in producing the effect of life and movement to an extraordinary extent. The toilers in every-day life, as they are repeatedly portrayed on canvas by Liebermann, whether it be in the potato-field or in a barn with low-raftered ceiling, at the spinning-wheel or forge, are always true to life; and the monotonous, regular movements of the workers, as each performs his allotted task,

are indicated in such a natural, realistic manner that one can almost imagine the busy fingers to be moving. No obtrusive detail disturbs the consistency of the whole, which, although full of a pulsating life, produces the effect of a mind-killing monotony. It is no insipid reflection of life which he shows, but the life itself, with all its pathetic sternness.

Most of Liebermann's works are sombre in colour and effect; in fact, poor folk working under grey skies produce a depressing, almost melancholy impression, but that does not alter the undeniable fact that they are true representations of actualities.

LE RÉGIMENT QUI PASSE

(*Edouard Detaille*)

JULES CLARETIE

AMONG the modern painters who have made notable, by their precise, sincere and close study, one of the most characteristic fields of French art—military painting—Edouard Detaille is certainly the one who in the first place won with a happy vivacity the votes of lovers of art and then retained them by his solid qualities. M. Detaille has nothing more to envy in celebrity and vogue; which alone amounts to a moneyed reputation. He *arrived,* we may say, at his first step; and the manner in which he has taken care to deserve the welcome of the public, by new studies and constant and resolute work, prove that his sudden fame was founded on a solid base. The newcomer of 1867 was to fulfil and surpass all the promises of his brilliant first appearance.

Certainly, very few artists ever presented themselves to the public at such an early age as M. Detaille. In 1867, when he exhibited *Meissonier's Studio* in the Salon, he was only nineteen years old. He had scarcely finished his studies at the *Lycée Bonaparte,* and spent two years under Meissonier, when he made his *début* with this picture, in which his entire delicacy of observation and correctness of drawing are already concentrated in a remarkable degree.

Jean-Baptiste-Edouard Detaille was born in Paris, October

5th, 1848. His brothers and sisters were numerous; two of his brothers were soldiers, and died, one during the War of 1870-71, and the other far from home in a German prison. At college, Edouard Detaille already felt an irresistible vocation for that art in which he was to be a master from his very first attempts. In August, 1865, he completed his course; in November, at the age of sixteen, he entered the studio of Meissonier, whom he venerated and deeply loved. I have heard Meissonier say with tender affection, when speaking of Detaille and De Neuville: "They have lots of talent, those *young men!*" And there was something in his tone that was truly paternal.

At first, Edouard Detaille felt quite upset under his master, having to unlearn the little that he knew, which he had taught himself by instinct. To tell the truth, this *little* was considerable. It was necessary for him to substitute for his alert and amusing *chic,* serious study—after nature—but resolutely, and very energetically with his fine nature of a Parisian, which seems doubled with an English nature, Detaille multiplied ten fold his brilliant faculties, and reenforced the sole gift he possessed by constant application, till the day came when Meissonier said to him: "It is well: now you can walk alone!"

The first picture of the future battle-painter, *Meissonier's Studio,* had been preceded by a considerable quantity of studies of all kinds: horses, soldiers, innumerable personages (all after models), landscapes, still life, and studies after the nude. One can never acquire the profound knowledge of

Le Régiment Qui Passe — Detaille

drawing and sureness of eye and hand that appear in the pictures of Edouard Detaille, without a certain obstinacy in early study; and it is true that in the arts, habitual facility is the result of the first fierce and vigorous toil.

The first great success of Edouard Detaille dates from the Salon of 1870. This was that curious composition, the *Combat entre les Cosaques et les gardes d'honneur.* "This," said Théophile Gautier, "is a real marvel of execution."

When the war broke out, Detaille shouldered the rifle. From the end of the month of August to the end of November, 1870, he was with the 8th battalion of the Garde Mobile of the Seine, encamped first at Saint-Maur and afterwards sent to Villejuif. Detaille found himself in the front row for studying the war. "He had to sketch everything under fire," said Charlet. On the day of the battle of Chatillon, Detaille, in a barricaded house participated in scenes that were at once very interesting for a painter and profoundly cruel for a Frenchman. Then he was sent to Pantin; he smelt fire at Bondy, and in November, General Appert attached him as secretary to himself and allowed him great liberty, which enabled the young artist to be present at all the scenes of the siege.

Like most of the younger painters of to-day, Detaille, like his friend Alphonse de Neuville, does not depict war in the same manner as Van der Meulen, or even as Horace Vernet, or Yvon, I mean by its theatrical and melodramatic side, but by the intimate side, which is the most striking, by the *episode:* the only way, to tell the truth, in which one can see

battles in which all the troops are shooting lying down, and in which the eye can not distinguish anything. "I try particularly," he wrote to me one day, "to reproduce what I have seen and what has struck me; there are, however, very great and very complicated scenes that I have seen and that I would treat as willingly as the intimate side. One impression that one could never render is that of disfigured corpses, armless and legless wounded men, a sort of museum of anatomy; one would never venture, I think, to present that to the public. I should like to make a picture of this kind and try to render the idea of a spot through which projectiles have passed."

In the Salon of 1872, Detaille had a picture which has become famous called *Les Vainqueurs*. Decorated with the Legion of Honour after this grand success, he exhibited in the Salon *En retraite* (1873), the *Cuirassiers de Morsbronn* (1874), and a *Régiment defilant sur le boulevard* (1875).

In the next Salon, Detaille seemed to rest after painting battle scenes: he exhibited the *Régiment qui passe,* a familiar military scene, such as might be observed by the Parisians on a November day in front of the *Théâtre de la Renaissance* or on the pavement of the Porte Saint-Martin. And this certainly was one of the most lifelike pictures of the Salon. I mean that it really lived with our daily life, that it was indeed *of its day,* at the same time that it was *of its painter.*

The *Régiment qui passe* is the 54th of the Line. M. Detaille, with that absolute talent that he puts into all his work, has made a portrait of the colonel, and certainly of several other officers. Even the drum-major who marches gaily at

the head of the drums must have been painted from nature. The regiment marches towards us on the *Boulevard Saint-Martin*. Behind the first row of drums, with knapsack on back and drum-sticks in hand, we see the brass of the musicians and the swing of the battalions which emerge from a confused background of cabs, omnibuses and a mass of vehicles halted by the column of soldiers. Nothing could be better seized, better treated, or more clearly rendered than this every-day scene which constitutes for M. Edouard Detaille a pause or a Parisian promenade between two battle pictures. *Le Régiment qui passe* is one of the painter's best compositions, and one of his best paintings. When I say compositions, I make a mistake, this scene was not made up, on the contrary—a supreme quality!—this was *seen*, as M. Detaille knows how to see. The eyes of the painter of the *Régiment qui passe* "seize" with singular vivacity and admirable precision, not only a scene in its entirety, but all its details, and his brush transports this momentary vision on to the canvas with absolute fidelity. Thus result the truth of the movement, and the exactitude of the physiognomies; thus we have that quite Flemish sincerity and reality of this talent that is so Parisian, so modern, and so richly endowed.

M. Detaille the painter of battles has classed himself among the painters of modern life. It is not only his soldiers, whose faces reddened with the cold, are closely studied, but also the amusing figures of the people who are following the marching regiment and the spectators who are watching it go by. There is a great deal of finesse and lots of humour in

those guttersnipes who are keeping step out in the mud so as to march to the sound of the music; the inevitable baker's boy —a participant in every Parisian street scene; the robust butcher with his empty basket on his back; the children who, excited by the military music, are ready to play truant from school; the police officer standing motionless beside the shop boy with his barrow; the omnibus conductors; the pedestrians opening their umbrellas under the falling snow, all these familiar characters are as vitally caught and represented as the spectators to the right and left, in which more than one well-known face might be recognised. On the left, there is M. A. de Neuville leaning on the balustrade—profile elegant and military, curled-up moustache, aspect of an officer of the *Etat-Major*. On the right, Detaille has represented himself by the side of his master, Meissonier; Meissonier, short, broad-backed, with his left hand leaning on his cane; Detaille, slim, slender, with a youthful and sympathetic face. He is the only one of all these people who carries his umbrella under his arm. The pretty, delicate, rosy lady standing near by is Mlle. Valtesse.

I wish all our painters would consent to familiarise themselves thus with what is our habitual life. The street has its own poetry, its own surprises, comedies and dramas; all that is necessary is to observe them; also, it is true to know how to look at them. It would seem that there is nothing in a regiment passing along the boulevard! How often a Parisian has assisted in such a common spectacle! Very well! M.

Detaille fixes this fugitive scene on the canvas, and out of what seems almost vulgar in life he makes something that is alert, fine and picturesque, while yet confining himself to complete exactitude and strict truth. This is what brands the original artist, the personal painter, capable of separating what is artistic from what might appear insipidity, and of showing that one may discover the most charming picture in a motive that one may come across at any moment on leaving one's own house.

CHAMPS-ELYSÉES

(Arnold Boecklin)

ANTIA MACMAHON

IN England surprisingly little interest seems to have been taken in the great Swiss-German artist whose death in 1901 left such an irreparable gap in Continental art circles—in Italy and Germany, indeed all classes were so completely under the sway of the artist's fascination that the " Boecklin Culte " rivalled the Wagnerian.

After, as well as before success came to him, Boecklin led a comparatively retired life. Unlike most revolutionary spirits, he propagated no gospel, made no effort to win adherents to his creed or to found a school to carry on his teaching; therefore, notwithstanding the enthusiasm his works aroused of late years the general public knew remarkably little about him. In fact, it was only a few weeks before Boecklin's death that a book appeared in Germany throwing some light on the Master's art theories and manner of working—the book in question being a *Tagesbuch* (Diary) kept by an artist, Rudolf Schick of the years '66, '68, '69, a period during which Schick lived in Rome on terms of closest intimacy with Boecklin.

Arnold Boecklin was born in Basel on October 16th, 1827, and made his first artistic studies in Düsseldorf, in 1846, under the artist Schirmer; he then visited the schools of Brussels and Paris, where he also worked diligently in

Champs-Elysées — Boecklin

the old galleries, studying the early masters. Except for the bare rudiments of art, Boecklin owed nothing to any of his teachers. From the very outset a passionate worshipper of Nature, Boecklin threw himself with ardour into the study of every branch of natural history, and it is probably the profound knowledge he thus acquired which enabled him afterwards to depict Nature with such a skilful touch. The independent character of his genius soon asserted itself, and rejecting the art canons of his fellow-artists, he began his research after something more perfect, with a patience which nothing could weary and a self-confidence that no amount of initial failure could shake.

From the first he considered colour to be of paramount importance in Art, and he even made it an object of special interest and study; one of the theories he introduced with regard to it being that every shade has its own peculiar significance, and it is undoubtedly due to the thoroughness with which he worked out this doctrine, and the fidelity with which he afterwards adhered to it, that his pictures have so much originality and expressiveness. Each work has its dominant note of colour which, consciously or unconsciously, attracts the observer's first glance, and tunes his mind, as it were, to the proper key necessary for him to be able to enter into the "motif" of the picture; thus in *Villa am Meere,* the judicious introduction of mauve—all shades of violet having mournful properties—produces a plaintive state of mind which enables one to immediately appreciate this beautiful picture, a painted Ode to Melancholy.

It is by the title of "poet of colour" that Boecklin's distinctive genius can best be defined. While other artists when composing their pictures, first draw their subjects and then arrange the colour scheme, Boecklin composed, as it were, in colours; no colourless, outlined forms ever flitted across his imagination, to be afterwards clothed in some carefully chosen hue—it was not by adding line to line, but rather by blending shade with shade into a harmony, which proved him a true musician in colour, that the master created his works.

During his stay in Paris, Boecklin was a witness of the February Revolution, and from the wild scenes which he then saw, some of the gruesome monsters afterwards painted by him draw their origin, accuracy of vision and tenacity of memory being among Boecklin's most remarkable characteristics. What the artist's keen grey eyes had once attentively observed was recorded for all time on his mind, and even after the lapse of years he could at will recall a scene clearly and minutely down to its most trifling details; so wonderfully gifted was Boecklin in this respect that he rarely painted directly from Nature or required the services of models, neither was he in the habit of jotting down in his notebook for later reference the suggestive combinations and tonal effects which occurred to him from time to time. His receptive mind received all and stored each impression away in its own special niche thus forming for the artist a treasury of beautiful images in which he found an apparently inexhaustible supply of material for his works.

From Paris he returned to Basel, but, on his father's opposing his wish to devote himself to Art, Boecklin, then twenty-three years of age, left his home and set out for Italy. He arrived in Rome with only a few shillings in his pocket, and for many years had a hard struggle for existence, often sleeping under Italy's blue skies for want of the money necessary to pay for his night's lodging, and, what was harder to bear, obliged to lose precious time painting "pot-boilers."

If it is to his Teutonic birth that he owes his soaring and fantastic imagination, he is not less indebted to the "Sunny South," where his artistic soul found a second home.

It was in Italy's warm, music-breathing atmosphere that he made the discoveries for his fascinating colour system; it was in this enchanted land, where history is so interwoven with fabulous legend that the most extraordinary beings find a perfectly suitable *mise en scène,* that Boecklin galvanised back into a life-like semblance the mythological world, illustrated in most of his works. Those who have sailed along the classically celebrated shores of Southern Italy, and have observed the shoals of dolphins which in summer-time disport themselves in the sparkling water, will have no difficulty in recognising the origin of such pictures as the *Spiel der Najaden* (play of the Naiads) or *Meeres Idylle* (Idyl of the Sea). The Island of Capri was a favourite resort of Boecklin's; another time he thought of building a villa and establishing himself on one of the Siren Isles opposite Amalfi—the supposed originals of Scylla and Charybdis.

Other artists have from time to time given us beautiful and classically correct representations of mythological periods—for example, Cornelius and Kaulbach, who led the revival of art in Germany in the Nineteenth Century—but there was always something stiff and artificial in the effect produced, and the personages seemed alien to their surroundings. With Boecklin, however, this is not so, for the moods of Nature he most loved to interpret were in themselves so wonderful that fauns and mermaids appear perfectly natural denizens.

In the *Champs-Elysées* (Field of the Blessed), for instance, how naturally the graceful sea-nymphs rise out of the fantastic quivering rushes, and how harmoniously the Centaur's majestic form fits in with the scenery around him! Again, in the picture entitled *Am Quell* (At the Spring), Boecklin has so skilfully blended phantasm with Nature that we feel nothing incongruous in the introduction of the two love-sick fauns who gaze amorously at a sleeping nymph half woman, half stone.

Boecklin remained in Italy almost uninterruptedly until 1862, when he left Rome for Hanover, where he had a commission to decorate the Villa Wedekind. Then for some years he led a very changeful existence between the chief German cities, every now and then paying flying visits back to his beloved Italy. In Basel, his native town, he adorned the walls of the New Museum with mythological frescoes.

Berlin he visited on the invitation of his great friend, Reinhold Begas, a kindred artist spirit, bringing with him

the now celebrated *Villa am Meere* (Villa by the Sea), which, while it was received with little enthusiasm by the general public, caused much delight to a small number of art connoisseurs to whom the wonderful colour system and poetic feeling with which this work is instinct came as a revelation. Of indescribable beauty is this lonely dwelling by the sea, around which poplar-trees (always introduced with much effect in Boecklin's pictures) sway sadly in the wind, while a cool grey sea—over which some sea-gulls hover wearily—creeps slowly up the beach towards the mourning figure which stands so pathetically alone. Specially lovely in this, as in all Boecklin's works, are the water effects, which affect us like sweet musical chords, to a degree only reached by two other great artists—Tintoretto and Ruisdael. The *Villa am Meere* is now in Munich, where Boecklin found a munificent patron in Count Schack, whose collection, left by the Count to the Kaiser, and by him presented to the people of Munich, contains many of the artist's most characteristic pictures.

For a time Boecklin, in company with his friends, Begas and Franz von Lenbach, took positions in the newly-founded Art Academy of Weimar; but soon found the restricted life there all too wearisome; Begas returned to Berlin, Lenbach to Munich, while Boecklin, after some years of further wandering, finally, in 1876, settled down in the lovely villa on the heights of Fiesole, overlooking Florence, where he remained, except for an occasional brief absence, till his death.

The exhibitions of Boecklin's works, held in Basel and Berlin, in celebration of his seventieth birthday, were what really convinced the public of the great genius of the artist who had for so long lived unesteemed in their midst. If here and there in these vast collections the malignant opponents of the Master were able to point in triumph at an uncouth grotesque composition, or at a colour effect which surpassed the line between originality and eccentricity, the great majority of the works exhibited showed such power of conception, fertility of imagination, audacity of treatment, poetic feeling and harmonious colouring, that the public was fairly astounded.

Among Boecklin's most noted compositions may be mentioned: *Die Insel der Todten* (the Isle of the Dead),—a work of impressive, awe-inspiring beauty to which no one can be indifferent. *Der Eremit* (the Hermit), a gem of delicate colouring and poetic sentiment, in which the venerable figure of the hermit, absorbed in his musical ecstasy, forms a striking contrast to the gleeful curious cherubs which the entrancing sounds have enticed down from Heaven. *Der Fruhlingstag* (the Spring-day)—a symbolical work showing the glamour that Love sheds over Nature. *Schweigen in Walde* (Silence in the Forest)—a notable example of Boecklin's success in depicting, by means of a fantastic symbol, some of Nature's most mysterious, unseizable moods. One must also mention the intensely interesting if somewhat disquieting *Selbst Portrat mit dem Tod* (portrait of himself with Death)—before which one stands won-

dering what the gruesome monster can be whispering to cause such a look of horror to rise in the painter's eyes.

When the Art of the Nineteenth Century comes to be reviewed, Arnold Boecklin will certainly stand out as one of its most remarkable figures. Like a meteor in the sky he appeared in the world of Art; it may be that as the meteor, notwithstanding the brilliancy of its temporary illumination, fades, leaving no trace behind, so also Boecklin, in spite of his powerful genius, may leave no lasting influence, since he passed away without leaving any school to carry on his innovating doctrines.

SAPPHO

(Alma-Tadema)

HELEN ZIMMERN

LAURENS ALMA-TADEMA was born on the 8th of January, 1836, in the little Frisian village of Dronryp, near Leeuwarden, in Holland. Like the Hobbemas, Dotingas, Ozingas and other well-known Dutch clans, the Tademas have been natives of the place from time immemorial, and their name is a familiar one in the legends relating to the formation of the Zuyder Zee. The evolutionist can trace with interest not a few of Tadema's qualities as a painter to his Frisian origin, evidences which appear again and again in his work, often in the most unlikely manner and places. The prefix "Alma" is peculiar to the painter, who received it from his godfather. This is also a Frisian family name and the painter joined it on to his own for the sake of distinction from other members of the family.

By birth he is of good Dutch burgher origin. His father, Pieter Tadema, was a notary, and seems to have been a man of considerable intelligence, whose aesthetic proclivities showed themselves in a great love for music, a taste inherited by his son. The mother was a woman of rare energy and intellect, adding one more to the long list of remarkable women who have borne great sons. Left early a widow with

Sappho Alma-Tadema

a large family of small children, two her own, the rest her husband's by a first marriage, frail of body, poor of purse, the brave woman yet held her own nobly. There was no faltering or failing in her struggle with the battle of life. Difficulties were faced calmly, resolutely, never shunned or weakly ignored. In much of the son's work we seem to see the mother's informing spirit, and if from his father, Alma-Tadema inherited his musical tastes, his mother gave him a yet more precious heritage, that of quiet perseverance, of marvellous energy, of infinite capacity for taking pains, as well as of a high and strenuous sense of duty. Our painter was but four years old when his father died. He was the youngest but one of the family, his mother's darling, and he watched her struggles with youthful eyes, and the lessons to be learnt from them sank deep into his soul.

Early impressions are the strongest, and it is interesting to know what were the outer surroundings of the future painter's boyhood. We all know Holland as a flat, monotonous land, not without a certain charm, perhaps, but somewhat tame and dull. Tadema's early home lay in one of the flattest of the flat portions of that level land. In his boyhood many of the women of Leeuwarden still wore the quaint Frisian dress, with its brilliant colours, stately caps and the veils that gave such a quaint distinctive character to both the inhabitants and the landscape in which they moved. It is also worthy of note that the province in which the painter was born and lived as a boy is one of the many

in Holland where Merovingian antiquities, such as coins and medals are found; and it was the Merovingians who first attracted him in history.

From his boyhood Tadema gave unmistakable evidence of the artistic bent of his nature. His favourite toy was a pencil. There is an anecdote preserved in the family that relates how the future painter, before he was five years old, had detected and corrected an error of drawing in the work of a master who was teaching a class of older boys. But unmistakable as was the artistic attitude of the lad, earnestly as he pleaded to be allowed to study Art, the course of his true love was not to run smooth. The mother and the boy's guardians did not look upon Art as a profession in which to make a career; it was needful in their position that the boy should select a more certainly bread-winning profession, and it was decided for him that he should become a lawyer like his father. To-day we hardly know whether it is more touching or comic to think of the painter of *Sappho,* of *Phidias,* of the *First-born,* of so many masterpieces, as destined for the dry, dusty, unpoetic profession of the law. The first thing, of course, was to educate him, and to this end the boy was sent to the public school at Leeuwarden, and passed through the usual school routine. It was all irksome to the lad, who in Greek and Latin never got much beyond the declensions, and who, while this lesson was going on, was usually occupied in drawing the old classic gods. Roman history, however, attracted him, a fact worth noting in relation to his afterwork. Tadema is always more Ro-

man than Greek; his Greeks are generally somewhat Romanised.

Having wrung the somewhat unwilling leave to study Art from mother and guardians, the first problem that presented itself to the young painter was where should these studies be carried on. In Holland, strange to tell, he could gain admission into no Art school or studio. Perchance the worthies who directed them thought the Frisian country lad wanting in talent. He therefore decided to go to Antwerp, choosing that city because the son of a family friend was also studying there. This town had the double advantage of being not very far from his home, and at the time one of the artistic centres of Europe. It was then the battle-ground of two schools absolutely opposed one to the other, both in principle and practice. The one was the French school of pseudo-classicism inspired by Louis David; and the other the so-called Belgian-Flemish school, whose aim and object was to revive the best traditions of the native Art as it had been in its most flourishing period. No one who has seen a work by Tadema will be in doubt as to the school to which the young man inclined; and his first step on arriving at Antwerp was to enter the Art Academy and study under Wappers, the leader of what may be termed the national movement. But if Tadema worked hard and learnt not a little at the Academy we have to look elsewhere for the master whose influence was deepest and most lasting. From the Academy Tadema entered the *atelier* of the famous Belgian historical painter Leys, and in him found

exactly what he then needed. To that master he owes much that distinguishes all his work—his historical accuracy, his attention to detail. His earlier productions naturally also reflect some of the mannerisms of that master, they have something of his hardness and precision. But the influence of Leys was practically of short duration; Tadema's individuality was too strong for plagiarism, conscious or unconscious.

In 1859, Leys was painting his frescoes for the Antwerp Guildhall, and he allowed Tadema to assist him in the work. The next few years were spent in Antwerp. In 1863, he married a French lady, and two years later he removed to Brussels, where he remained till the death of his wife in 1869. It was in 1869 that Tadema came to live in London, and commenced what may be named his English career. The first pictures painted after that date are *The Vintage* (1870); *The First Whisper* (1870); *At Lesbia's* (1870); and *In the Temple* (1871). The year 1881 is memorable chiefly as the *Sappho* year.

In *Sappho,* this poetess does not appear to most as their ideal Muse. She sits by a kind of desk, on which lies the wreath bound with ribbons that is the crown of poets, and is clad in one of those combinations of pale green and grey that Tadema loves; violets, as is fitting and in accordance with tradition, crown her black hair—black as a raven's wing; and the violets, the grey and green of the dress, harmonise exquisitely with the dark complexion of the face. By her side stands her daughter. There is something sweet

and virginal in the earnest face, and the form is graceful. But the daughter is not beautiful like the mother. Behind *Sappho* rise three tiers of a marble exedra, and on these, in various attitudes, sit three pupils of her school. But beautiful as are many of these forms, and interesting as they all are, they are not the real soul of the picture. This is Alcæus, who, opposite Sappho, clothed in a pale rose-coloured garment, sits half reclining touching the strings of a lute. The story runs that Alcæus wished to gain Sappho's support for a political scheme of which he was head and front; and the story runs also that he loved her, and in the passionate expression of her eyes and mouth we here read rather the lover than the politician. But that which makes this picture live in the memory is more especially its indescribable colouring. Often has Tadema given us delicious little bits of blue sky, but never such a sky as this, that has a depth, a clearness such as no other living painter could possibly have given. The dark blue skies of other artists have a way of looking very much like what they are, pieces of canvas daubed with dark blue. To give atmosphere to their skies, most painters must give us clouds. Tadema alone can give us such a southern heaven as this one, one mass of deep rich blue, looking all the deeper, all the bluer, from its contrast with the dark leaves of the stone pines that separate the amphitheatre from the shore. Through these we see the sea, that seems positively to ebb and flow. The marble of the seats is pure white—dazzlingly white in this clear light and sunshine.

JEANNE D'ARC

(*Bastien-Lepage*)

PRINCE BOJIDAR KARAGEORGEVITCH

DYING at the early age of thirty-six he left behind him an immense amount of work; indeed it is hard to believe that all his pictures were painted within the brief space of fifteen years.

Bastien-Lepage entertained the deepest love for his own country, his "dear Lorraine." He passed almost all his time at Damvillers, and would often set off to his work at seven o'clock in the morning, not returning till nightfall. The evenings, too, he would spend in drawing, and it was only when he could no longer keep his eyes open that he would desist. Bastien-Lepage had no special method, no particular *technique* in his painting. All his landscapes were composed and painted from Nature out of doors in all kinds of weather, and even his largest canvases were painted from the first to the last touch in the open.

"One must keep one's palette very clean," he would say; "it is hard to see what one is doing with one's colours fresh without adding to the difficulty by keeping the palette dirty."

He was very particular about having his white in the middle of his palette, setting the blues, greens and cadmiums to the right, the ochres, reds and browns to the left.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Jeanne D'Arc — Bastien-Lepage

He worked with bold touches, putting down at once the exact tone he wished to obtain, never preparing by underpainting in neutral tones to be gone over again subsequently. He carefully prepared his tone on his palette and never laid a touch upon his canvas until he was quite sure of his result. It is to this boldness of touch that his painting owes that brilliancy and freshness which are its chief characteristics. At the first sitting he would give to his pictures, even the largest of them, the general effect which he wished to obtain; then he would work over them again and again to bring them to perfection—a perfection, however, with which he was scarcely ever satisfied.

The more a picture advanced, the more Bastien-Lepage would find to do in it. His artistic conscientiousness could never content itself with anything that was *almost* right but not quite so, so that every one of his pictures is a perfect work of art. Bastien-Lepage was no more a product of the École des Beaux-Arts than he was a pupil of Cabanel. His artistic sense was innate, as were his exquisitely delicate perception and feeling. His genius rendered the poetry of Nature with such intensity that it is impossible to look at his pictures without being deeply moved by them.

His first master was his father, who, himself an artist, had early detected the latent genius of his son. I have seen in his studio at Damvillers a drawing of his brother which he did when he was only five years old. In this little drawing, awkward enough though it be, one already sees the search after truth. The child is represented in a toy-cart;

and a circle indicates the head slightly bent at an angle to the body. It is scarcely a drawing, and yet it is already a work of art. Bastien-Lepage went to Paris in 1867 at the age of eighteen. From the outset of his career at the École des Beaux-Arts he foreshadowed his future greatness, obtaining the first place by his drawing. As soon as he had proved his right to the first place in the studio he began to work by himself, guided only by his own lights, making only an occasional appearance at the school. He never obtained any medal there. He was no prize pupil ready to execute when called upon any given subject. This was clearly shown on the occasion when he competed for the *Prix de Rome*. His canvas, although it was a masterpiece, did not win him the first prize. This was awarded to a picture much more academic, but infinitely less artistic. Bastien-Lepage swore a little, smashed his umbrella, and forgot all about it, and was soon entirely absorbed again in his beloved art. Even if he had won the prize his intention was not to go to Rome. What indeed could the painter of *Joan of Arc,* of *In the Hay,* and of *Love in the Village* have found to inspire him in the classic subjects of the Eternal City?

Bastien-Lepage returned to Damvillers after spending three years at the École des Beaux-Arts. At first he remained there only a short time, then gradually prolonged his visits, and would certainly have ended by coming very rarely to Paris only for the sake of painting those charming portraits in which he knew so well how to place his subject in an appropriate sitting, and render not only the physiog-

nomy of the sitter, but also the surrounding atmosphere, putting into a few square inches of canvas—most of his portraits are quite small—like Balzac, a few lines with a whole volume of meaning. He won his first success at the Salon of 1875 with the portrait of his grandfather. The old man is sitting in his garden with his handkerchief and his snuff-box on his knees. The picture is full of repose. Everything is restful. It is not only a portrait but a poem.

Bastien-Lepage was always thinking of his art. He would bring round all objects of conversation to painting. He never tired of talking about it, or of seeking after a higher perfection in it. He was by nature very kind and generous, and often enough to be his friend meant to owe him numerous favours. In character he was extremely gay, and nothing, not even in the last days of his life the terrible illness which carried him away, could rob him of his child-like gaiety. Bastien-Lepage resided with his family at Damvillers, and lived there the simple, healthy life of which he was so fond.

One day, I remember, he saw his mother returning fatigued from the fields. She kept seeing before her some thistles which she had looked at too long in the corn: whereat Bastien-Lepage was at first much alarmed. The son tended the mother, till at last the painter began to take a deep interest in the thing. He questioned his mother, asking her to tell him all she saw, whether the thistles appeared to her as actual existing objects, or if she only saw them when she closed her eyes. But it was really a vision that she had

had—a curious optical illusion that had the appearance of reality. On the green in front of their house, she saw again the thistles quite big, close to her, gradually getting smaller as they receded, and while her son spoke to her she still saw them. This idea haunted the painter's mind, and was to suggest a great picture to him. From it arose the idea of his *Jeanne d'Arc,* his masterpiece. With his mother, a simple and charming woman of Lorraine, whose intelligent maternal love constituted the great charm of home to her son, the painter made a journey to Domrémy, the little village where Jeanne d'Arc was born. He saw the heroine's house pictured to himself in his mind's eye the scene of the vision, and then at once set to work. He made some drawings; then, in fresco on the wall of his studio with a few touches of the brush, the sketch, life-size, of his picture. In her garden, Jeanne d'Arc gazes afar off in ecstasy, and in her eyes the painter has succeeded in putting all that is passing in her soul. One feels that this young girl is actually in communion with a world beyond our own. Her eyes, wide open and very bright, light up her face, making of this peasant girl a superior being. The pose is exquisitely true. Jeanne d' Arc leans against a tree with one arm outstretched, seized in the very course of a movement by her ecstasy and wholly wrapt in her vision. The two figures which appear to her floating between the house which forms the background of the picture and the apple tree in the foreground, have been so wonderfully represented by the artist, that to the spectator, too, they seem rather a vision than a re-

membrance. It is eight years since I saw this picture at the Salon, and the deep impression it made on me seems to date from yesterday.

"There is only one thing to be admired," Bastien-Lepage used to say, "and that is Nature. There is only one art, that is to reproduce Nature; the manner, the means, matter little." He painted a series of pictures in absolutely different styles, but all perfect in composition—portraits, landscapes, interiors, sea-pieces. He tried every kind of art, even modelling and etching.

At last he was unable to work any more; and he died on the 10th of December, 1884, breathing his last in my arms. At his grave's head, his mother and brother lovingly planted an apple tree, which every spring showers down its wealth of pearly petals over the last resting-place of the great master whose loss we all mourn.

IN THE DUNES

(*Anton Mauve*)

A. C. LOFFELT

THE 5th of February, 1889, was the first anniversary of Mauve's death. His friends and admirers met that day at the burial place near the Canal—which runs from The Hague to Scheveningen—to unveil a monumental stone erected by the painter's brother-artists and friends. It was just such a fine silvery and slightly hazy day as the painter himself used to love, and one which exquisitely harmonised with his mind and art. On the day of his burial, almost a year before, it had also been noticed that nature seemed to bestow a last proof of her affection for the sympathetic artist who had adored her in this calm and transparent mood, rather than in her moments of dramatic display. The slab is a simple granite stone, polished only on the side which bears the name Anton Mauve, 1838-1888, and roughly hewn on the top. It stands erect, because the painter's loving wife preferred to have only turf and wild flowers over the resting-place. A slender birch tree and a fir had been transplanted from Laren, where the painter spent the last and happiest years of his life. They had been chosen from a group growing not far from his homely cottage, which has been memorised in some of those last superb water-colours, which show the painter at the highest level of his charming art.

In the Dunes — Mauve

The sheep-painter, Ter Meulen, Mauve's most fervent admirer, and one might almost say his truest disciple, delivered a short oration full of feeling and that classic simplicity which the master had always loved.

Every one who is familiar with Mauve's work will remember having been attracted by his classic purity of composition. Not Mauve, but nature herself, composed the greatest part of that goodly array of noble works which is now dispersed all over the world. For simplicity and purity of style, Mauve was hardly equalled by Corot. There may be more fantasy in Corot, who appeared sometimes to look through the eyes of Claude.

Mauve had produced during the thirty years of his working period an immense quantity of pictures, drawings in water-colour and some in black-and-white, mostly in a very genial and sympathetic art, of which a very small part only is to be found in Holland. His popularity in Great Britain and America may be ascribed to his eminently Anglo-Saxon character, the Dutch for the most part being of the same origin as the British. The poetry of Mauve's art, its tenderness, the unobtrusive, quiet sadness of the scenery and people which attracted him most; the homeliness, humour and domestic happiness which he interpreted in his interiors and scenes of country and village life, can only be fully appreciated by people of the same descent.

I think the painter is best known all over the world by his flocks of sheep, depicted at all seasons and in every kind of weather, and under every condition of light and air; by

his sheep in the folds and by his cows in "*de Melkbocht*";* also by his horses ploughing or at rest. Remarkable, too, are some of his coast scenes, showing the "pinks," or Dutch fishing-boats, about to be pulled over the sands by long teams of ill-fed looking horses.

Of Mauve's sheep pictures, the one which made the most lasting impression on my mind among many others belonging to the same style, was his magnificent painting first shown at The Hague Exhibition of 1881, depicting a small flock of sheep in the downs nibbling the scanty grass of the sandhills. The sheep were about eight inches long on the canvas and beautifully modelled and drawn. One could almost "pluck the wool from the fleeces," as the old amateurs are wont to say. Above the imposing downs there was only to be seen a small streak of light, bluish-grey, silky sky; the rest of the picture was the silvery downs with their light-coloured vegetation, and "white woolly sea," as the Dutch poet Vandal described a flock of sheep.

Mauve was a great painter and poet of light in his sunny and glowing "*melk-bochten.*" How beautiful is the glitter of the checkered light on the emerald grass—how splendid the sun's reflections upon the sleek hides of his black-and-white cow! The robes of an empress could not be more resplendent than the hides of Dutch cattle in the sunlight.

Our artist also delighted to represent in his works the

* The paddock or reserved spot in the meadow where the cows are gathered for milking.

richness and fertility of arable land, with the plough at work, drawn by black or white horses. He loved to paint some white powerful horse, contrasting its silvery reflections with the dark violet clouds and the grey, hazy atmosphere. It seemed when he painted it as if the vapour were actually rising from the fertile land, and from the steaming hide and nostrils of the ploughing beast.

Other favourite themes of Mauve's were pretty country lanes enlivened, perhaps, by a wood cart, or a man on horseback, or, it might be, by a peasant woman on the way to market or collecting fuel, or a wood-cutter at work.

Over these scenes he would spread that transparent and delicate haze, which is so characteristic of the fruitful days of March and April. For at that time of the year nature sometimes seems covered by an almost imperceptible silken veil of the tenderest grey colour. A short time ago I was shown among the collection of an amateur a work by Mauve, representing a sheepfold on a snow-covered heath. The sheep are being quietly driven into the fold by the shepherd and his dog. But Mauve rarely chose snow effects for a subject. In this case the white tones of the snow were wonderfully true.

The painter always took a delight in drawing and painting birch trees in his landscapes; the birch with its graceful and silvery stem was his favourite tree.

Anton Mauve was born September 18, 1838, at Zaandam, the small town in North Holland which has become well-known in history by Czar Peter the Great's sojourn

there to learn the craft of ship building. Mauve's father was a Protestant clergyman in this thriving little place; chiefly known now for its oil and paper-mills, and extensive timber trade. Anton was still very young when the worthy pastor was nominated clergyman at Haarlem, the capital of North Holland. When a boy, the future painter manifested a strong taste for drawing, but his father objected to his becoming an artist. A compromise, however, was effected between youthful ambition and parental prudence. If the son would consent to study for a diploma as a drawing-master, which would insure him a livelihood in case he should fail as an artist, his father undertook to withdraw his opposition, and Anton would be permitted to follow his bent. This proved rather a bitter pill for the youngster, as he possessed certain personal opinions on the art of drawing which were not at all those generally accepted by the brotherhood of the pencil. The young artist, almost in despair, once burst into tears, asserting that he would never learn to draw in the manner his masters thought it should be done. He entered the studio of the cattle-painter, Van Os, but his master was by no means pleased with his young pupil, complaining that Mauve could never finish a subject. Not long after this apprenticeship Anton set himself to painting little pictures, which are sometimes met with at auctions. They show mostly the neat manner and conventional style of the period and of his former master. The original genius that was to come can scarcely be discerned.

Mauve's family was not rich, and when on a fine day

the youth packed his knapsack to go to Oosterbeek for some time, it was with a purse as light as his heart. But the painter never was of the modern Bohemian type, who spends a fortune in luxurious eating and drinking and collecting *bric-à-brac*. So he felt quite happy in beautiful Oosterbeek (near Arnhem), at that time the Barbizon of Holland.

During the winter season Mauve settled in Amsterdam, where he worked hard and made a little money. But, of course, his art was not yet well paid. A favourite resort of the painter in summer time was The Hague with Scheveningen. He once brought his luggage to a farm-house near Dekkersdinn, in the neighbourhood of Loosduiner, and lived there for a considerable time.

This is a fine spot with silvery downs bordered with bright grass, where small cows and sheep nibble their scanty pasture. Here Mauve found some of his most important and favourite themes, such as poor cots built in or near the downs where slender, poorly nurtured women tended a few sheep or a goat, or occupied themselves in bleaching linen. His painting had not yet gained that transparency and brilliancy of tone, which the artist acquired in subsequent years. At this time his work was grey but not always pellucid or silvery. Thus it came to pass that critics and public began to talk of *The Grey School,* for a few other artists painted in the same neutral scale of tints. The farm called *Kronenburg* still exists, but the quiet and picturesque environs of the rustic spot have been spoiled and desecrated by a steam tramway. The splendid downs have been levelled by all-

encroaching "civilisation." At The Hague Mauve first met his wife, a gentle-minded, tender-hearted woman, belonging to a family very proficient in music. She was just the wife to be an angel in the home of an artist like Mauve, who at times could be moody and irritable when under the influence of nervous troubles. He loved the naïve ways of children and his marriage was happily blessed with them. Artz, the brothers Maris, Ter Meulen, Tholen, Bastert, and Tersteeg were, amongst others, good friends of the family. He lived in a roomy house with fine garden on the Zwarteweg, near the Wood, almost opposite the Gebouw voor Kunsten en Wetenschappen (Hall for Arts and Sciences) where he frequently attended the fine concerts given during the season.

The beloved and admired artist is not dead. As we walk in the rural lanes beneath the slender birches wrapped in their mantle of silver-grey haze, or watch the chequered sunlight dancing into the secluded nooks of some emerald meadow, when we hear the echoes of the tinkling sheep bells on the moors, we think: "There lives Mauve!"

THE BASHFUL LOVER

(Josef Israels)

DAVID CROAL THOMSON

CLOSELY allied to the Barbizon School of Painters, which may be said to have terminated with Daubigny in 1878, the Dutch artists are particularly to be admired for the tones and values introduced with much ability into their pictures.

Josef Israels, the brothers Maris, and Anton Mauve form the greatest group of the School of modern Holland, and all the other artists in that country are more or less influenced by them, and of these, Israels at present is my theme.

Josef Israels, who still lives at The Hague,* where he is greatly esteemed, is a member of that family whose banished inheritance is found in every country, and he is one of the few instances of a Jew who has obtained the highest distinction in the pictorial arts. Josef Israels was born in Groningen on the 27th of January, 1827, and for nearly the whole of the past fifty years he has been living and painting in Holland. Groningen is an interesting city in the far north of Holland where all the sternness of the Dutch character finds full play.

In the picture of which the *Bashful Suitor* in the Metropolitan Museum in New York is the type, we find the lovers

* Died August, 1911.

in those years when "to be young" is "very heaven," absorbed in themselves and their own feelings. The landscape seems to fall into tune and to sympathise with them. Israels has a peculiar way of painitng these country roads and fields. The colour, except in his small window landscapes, is unreal but imaginative. Such greens and blues and browns are quite unlike anything we can see, but what a depth of feeling and wealth of suggestion there is in them.—E. B. Greenshields, *Landscape Painting and Modern Dutch Artists* (New York, 1906).

Even though trained in another religion, Israels must have realised the more serious aspects of life when brought up amongst these staid and strict Dutch burghers, the descendants of the men who rallied round William the Silent to fight for civil and religious liberty. Israel's early history has been told by different writers, but the best authority is *Josef Israels: L'homme et l'artiste,* published by J. Schalekamp (Amsterdam, 1889-1890), with etchings and other illustrations.

The young Josef Israels for years studied the Talmud,—there had once been serious thought of training him for a Rabbi—and he went thoroughly into the traditional education of the Hebrew religion, but the idea of making him a teacher was abandoned, and while still very young he was installed by his father in his office of a bill-broker to help in the smaller duties therein. Above the office the boy was permitted to have a room where he could follow his bent for drawing, which was gradually becoming more manifest.

The Bashful Lover

The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Israels

Israel's first attempt in oil painting, made, it is said, in 1840, when he was fourteen years of age, was a copy of a picture representing a Calabrian brigand, by an artist called Jan Kruseman—who has no reputation outside of Holland and not very much in it. His first actual success was the portrait of a neighbour, a prosperous confectioner. This patron paid the painter by sending him an immense tart, and his mother's joy is said to have been great when she saw this first substantial evidence of her son's success.

Then came the inevitable turning-point in the boy's life. His father saw clearly enough that he was not adapted for a commercial career, but naturally he hesitated to make a decision, which was so momentous for his son. But it was only a question of time and then Josef was sent to Amsterdam to study art seriously.

To Kruseman's studio he was sent, and there, with many other students he began the long battle of an artist's career.

For two years he persevered with the studies to which he was directed, and he lived in the Ghetto amongst friends of his own people. In 1845, when he was nineteen, the sight of a painting by Ary Scheffer, the Dordrecht born artist, who had become so much sought after, roused in Israels new wishes and new hopes; and although he had very little money to pay his way, he resolved to go to Paris.

In 1848 Israels was back again in Amsterdam, and there he commenced a series of historical pictures, of which probably he would not now care to say he is vastly proud; for

he had not yet found his *métier,* and he had many sore disappointments before he knew what he could do best. After a number of trying experiences, he fell ill; and, miserable with the sense of failure in his artistic powers as well as in his bodily strength, he went out to Zandvoort, near Haarlem, to recruit his health. There, in a little primitive Dutch village, he found the subjects best suited to his natural temperament. The patient endurance of the fisher-folk, their sense of dignity in labour and gravity in action, altogether enthralled him; he felt that he had now found what he could paint best, what he could most readily understand and adequately interpret.

From this time forward he became the painter of Dutch fishermen and women, of Dutch peasants and their children; in fact, he became to Holland very much what Jean François Millet became to France.

One of Israels' first successes in his new line of work was painted in 1856 and was called *Past Mother's Grave,* a subject fairly well known from the etching which has since been made of it. It represents a fisherman carrying one child on his arm, and leading another by the hand, hurrying past the dead mother's resting-place. The evident affliction on the man's face, and the general pathetic and sympathetic tone of the picture, impressed it on every spectator. Israels was henceforth a painter of real Dutch life as it actually exists, and his picture *Past Mother's Grave* was placed in the Rijks Museum or National Gallery of Holland at Amsterdam.

He thoroughly understands the peasants of Holland and the subjects of his pictures meditate with exactly the same seriousness that a Dutchman does. Little children are also particularly attractive to him. and those who cannot afford to spend a large sum in an important work can still obtain a specimen of his most charming art in a picture of one or more children.

Since 1863 he has lived at The Hague where his friendship is much sought after by the artists and *littérateurs* of Holland. His residence is within half an hour of Scheveningen, and is but a few minutes' walk of the sand-dunes and trees which he liked occasionally to paint.

CARMENCITA

(*J. S. Sargent*)

MARION HEPWORTH DIXON

THERE is a story current, and may be taken for just what such stories are worth, that few sitters leave the well-known studio in Tite Street without a feeling of resentment against their portrayer. The statement, made in all probability by the artist himself, is just one of those jests which contain a fraction of the truth. There are critics, for instance—critics, moreover, of a nice understanding in matters more immediately discernible—who see a positive hostile quality in Mr. John S. Sargent's outlook on men and things. I think it was Mr. D. S. MacColl who recently averred that he found something "cold and accursing" in the eye of the American painter.

To such a critic then, as well as to a host of people who knew little about the matter, Mr. Sargent's portraits would seem to suggest more a criticism than an appreciation. The painter, in a word, is roundly accused of envisaging his model as from a vast height, and employing in his rendering of an object analytical qualities rather than any other. The sitter is at once a problem and a "subject," a subject out of whom the artist must needs wring the most vital confessions. Not that there is anything intrusive or familiar in Mr. Sargent's pictorial intimacies. Quite obviously, his attitude is

Carmencita Sargent

cool. It is discretion itself. One might say it was Olympian in its detachment. As a matter of fact, the artist's eye, though so alert, is tempered by a curiously sobered judgment. The hand so audaciously dexterous at moments, is restrained by the nice eclecticism of the stylist. To make a somewhat ungainly comparison, it might be said that Mr. Sargent makes a point of taking up and digesting his matter before he writes it down on canvas, the process of digesting being indispensable to a craftsman who will set down nothing but what is vital and essential to the immediate task before him.

Do such methods count, we may ask ourselves, or do they not count for righteousness? It is true that the answer may be difficult to come by without asking a still further question—the question, what is the primary business of the portrait-painter? A faithful rendering, it is obvious, can be obtained in a photograph, a flattering version by the merest mediocrity, the first popular painter that comes to hand. It will probably be urged that Beauty is the test of what is vital and permanent in portraiture. But we have merely to conjure up the name of any really great portrait-painter—take, say, Holbein, or Valasquez at a venture —and it is at once patent that the Beauty test (beauty, that is to say, conventially considered) cannot be relied on. If the end and aim of portraiture were merely to please by prettiness, we should lack the canvases that immortalise Philip IV. of Spain, and Rembrandt would have had to select other subjects than his *Rabbi* and his *Old Woman*.

If conventional beauty were a test at all, we should hasten to acclaim M. Carolus-Duran's attempt to render the Countess of Warwick; and in thinking of Millais, we should recall his *Mrs. Samuel Beddington,* and his *Duchess of Westminster,* rather than such a masterpiece as his *Mrs. Perugini.*

Quite clearly, then, the object of the greatest painters has not been to please by presenting us with objects of conventional beauty. Their aim has been to portray character, and the beauty they have evoked has come by reason of their penetrating analysis. To create a type, a permanent type, by the nervous—I had almost said the impassioned—rendering of a living type: this surely has been the endeavour of the great master; and that the result was also a study in tone, an essay in lighting, and a score of other things besides, merely means that such portraits were painted by painters—painters who delighted in their craft and who revelled in the surprise and mystery of handled pigments.

Now, the case of the Masters is the case of Mr. Sargent, if I may venture to place a still youthful Academician in line with his spiritual forebears. But, in truth, he seems to have kept resolutely in touch with them from the very first.

To begin with in 1886 he was born in Florence—a circumstance so congruous that we must almost feel grateful to his American parents for their timely foresight in the matter. For an original sensitive child to have grown up in the Tuscan city was clearly a discipline in itself—a cer-

tain sense of austere beauty, the beauty latent in the city of his birth, being found in the most audacious of Mr. Sargent's early canvasses. It was indeed in some sort as a disciple of Botticelli and a devout lover of Titian and Tintoretto that the boy of nineteen turned his face in the direction of Paris and knocked at the doors of Carolus-Duran's studio on the Boulevard du Montparnasse. Looking back, one finds oneself wondering what such a student had to learn from such a master, so immediate was the development and so brilliant the accomplishment of the newcomer. What he learnt is to be seen in the portrait of the patron himself —a portrait something too exclusively Gallic in its mannerisms, but a work, at the same time, so full of dexterity, dash, and character as to be fairly astonishing in a lad of barely twenty-two. As a matter of fact, it was a *tour de force* such as might have emanated from the French painter's own studio. But once having arrived at a knowledge of his powers, having proved his technical abilities, it is small wonder that Mr. Sargent found himself longing to sniff the outer air. A sense of stuffiness and stagnation may be no necessary part of the atmosphere of Montparnasse, but it is possible, all the same, for an energetic and expanding young painter to require more space to breathe. It is true that a Frenchman, under such circumstances, requires incredible courage to pack his valise. To the cosmopolitan, a journey means little more than the effort of getting into a train. Now the train Mr. Sargent was at business to take carried him into Castile, and in the ample spaces of the

Prado the young man found room enough even for his stature.

At the same time, it is easy to exaggerate Mr. Sargent's indebtedness to Velasquez. His debt, I take it, is chiefly that of requiring a certain sobriety and dignity. I am not forgetting that Mr. Henry James has amused himself by conjuring up an ineffaceable picture of his brilliant compatriot, exhibiting him more or less supine before the great master. It is a picture, it will be remembered, in which the young impressionist is seen awaiting the supreme revelation in the museum of Madrid, and awaiting the revelation on his knees. Well, I will concede that the *Portrait of a Young Lady*—a young lady dressed in black satin and holding a single flower in the upraised hand—which was exhibited in 1881, may have been painted in some such posture. It is delicate and stimulating enough, at any rate, to have been directly inspired by the master.

This delightful work, I shall not forget to say, was preceded in the Salon by the little picture called *En route pour la Pèche,* by the *Carolus-Duran*—awarded an honourable mention—by the *Portrait of the Wife* of M. Pailleron, a futher picture of the *Pailleron Children,* and the famous canvas *Smoke of Ambergris.* In 1881, Mr. Sargent was already *hors concours.* A year later, on his return from Spain, when that astounding piece of realism called *El Jaleo* had finally arrested an astonished Parisian public, we find the artist moving from his studio in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs to a larger one on the Bouvelard Berthier.

It was here, if I mistake not, that he painted the picture which was, in a sense, to make his fortune. The large canvas called simply *Portraits of Children,* but which is often for purposes of identification, referred to as *The Hall of the Four Children,* does, in fact, represent a rich, shadowy antechamber, where tall screens and monster Japanese vases mirror themselves in the vast face of a shining floor. Four slim-legged, white pinafored children group themselves with naïve spontaneity about this happy interior; they are seen that is to say, as if caught unconsciously at play, the absolute unconventionality of their attitudes, added to a certain distinction of lighting, constituting one of the picture's chief and foremost merits.

Painted at Houlgate the same summer was the portrait of Madame Gauthereau, a famous Parisian beauty whose charms the painter was unlucky enough to associate with Botticelli. At any rate, the severe drawing of the lady's head in profile, the sensitive modelling of the all but undraped bust (the lady, I should hasten to say, is represented in a ball-gown), conduced little to either her own or her friend's satisfaction. Delighted to profess itself scandalised, an ignorant public hastened to prove itself a Philistine one. The Botticelli divinity was accordingly roughly handled, and the critics as Philistine as the public, joined issue with the clubs and côteries. The noise was prodigious, the scandal proving something of a rehearsal of the recent storm that has raged round Rodin's statue to Balzac. Not that the painter was driven from Paris by any such foolish misunder-

standing. There were pothers of many sorts besides. The friction caused by the newly-imposed American tariff on foreign pictures, a certain feeling of reluctance on the part of the painter to compete with his master, Carolus, these and many other things are supposed to have given London the happy opportunity of acquiring Mr. Sargent. Incidentally the commission to paint the portrait of the Misses Vickers may have helped to bring about so desirable a result. At any rate, from the moment of painting this well-known group, we find Mr. Sargent more or less located in London, the Royal Academy marking its sense of indebtedness to the painter by electing him an Associate in 1894 and a full member three years later.

In the meantime, or, more strictly speaking, in 1885, we find Mr. Sargent spending his holiday at Broadway, and here, in the bewitching twilight of the long summer evenings, came into existence the picture known to the world as *Carnation Lily, Lily Rose*. Its wide acclamation, its purchase by the Chantrey Fund, could be nothing less than gratifying to the painter, who, setting up a studio in London, devoted himself anew to painting portraits. He was not, however, forgetful of the mother country. Two visits in succession were paid to the United States. The first, beginning at Newport, resulted in the fine study of Mrs. Henry Marquand; the second and later visit—a visit of a year's duration—saw Mr. Sargent attacking such widely different subjects as the portraits of Edwin Booth, Joseph Jefferson, the *Carmencita* (now in the Luxembourg),

the spirited kit-kat of Mrs. Manson in a Watteau dress, and the less well-known, but wholly delightful *Beatrice*.

I must pass over much important work; such work as the highly imaginative decorations for the Boston Public Library, which were painted at Fairford in a vast studio erected on purpose by himself and Mr. Edwin Abbey; the portraits of Mr. Coventry Patmore and the full-length, life-sized representation of Mr. Graham Robertson. In either case I do not know if virile characterisation can farther go. Without the smallest accent of exaggeration—indeed, with a reticence which seems to make us hold our breath and listen—we have two men presented to us so diverse, so opposite, and yet so typical of our present civilisation, that both the strength and the weakness of that civilisation seem mirrored in Mr. Sargent's creations. An even more strenuous grip of subject and material is seen in the study of Mr. Wertheimer. Fastidious, swift and incisive, the artist shows himself in these canvases, so capable of subtle distinctions, that, in Mr. Henry James's admirable phrase, "perception" seems "a kind of execution."

But of all the technical qualities that remain to be described, the brush power, the handling, the sense nearly always conveyed of a certain magnificence of line—these things can barely be touched upon in a sketch necessarily so brief as the present one. And yet it is impossible to look at such portraits as those of the Misses Vickers, or, again, at such others as Mrs. Hammersley or Mrs. Carl Meyer,

without seeing the daring originality which lies at the very root of Mr. Sargent's sense of design.

It is in suggesting the potentialities of his sitter that the artist differs so widely from the portrait-painters of the last century, to whom he is sometimes ignorantly compared. In the Eighteenth Century, no doubt, Romney and Reynolds were fully able to realise the dashing and buxom young matrons who came to pose to them as Hebe or Flora, but it is useless to suppose that the tense "prickly" and complex woman of our present era could be summarised in any such off-hand way. Ladies no longer play at being goddesses; they have, possibly, even a sense of remoteness from the gods. A thousand perplexities and anxieties loom up before the contemporary man and woman, and, be sure of it, every man and woman bears something of the uneasy presage in his or her face. And this clearly Mr. Sargent has realised. A student of character, he remains a modern of moderns. With all his affiliation to the Great Masters, he reveals himself the sharpest, the most precise instrument the century has forged. We may congratulate ourselves that it is so. Every age has its characteristics, special, subtle and intangible; lucky is the age that has also its painter, for it is he who is left to settle the visible terms by which his century shall hereafter make itself known.

THE HOLY GRAIL

(*Edwin A. Abbey*)

M. H. SPIELMANN

IN the spring of 1890 the authorities who had set up the great Public Library at Boston, in the United States, determined that it should be decorated in a manner befitting its importance and its dignity. Mr. J. S. Sargent and Mr. E. A. Abbey were chief among those who were invited to contribute to the splendour of the palace, and to the latter fell the decoration of the "waiting" or "delivery" room. It was decided that the frieze running round the chamber should receive a painted embellishment, and this Mr. Abbey proceeded to design, introducing such modifications into it as were rendered necessary by the alterations which the architect had to make in the plans.

In selecting the mighty legend of the Sangrael (a title fascinating to the mediæval mind on account of its acrostic construction *"San greal,"* holy grail or cup and *"Sang real,"* true or royal blood), he had been inspired by the wish to adopt what was at once the most appropriate and the most poetical of all literary themes. For it is the subject that lies at the root of all Western romance, the great fountain of literature that is common to all Christendom, Saxon and Celt, Gallic and Welsh.

The first idea was that the artist's decoration should deal

with the works of Shakespeare—the common property of England and America: a task for which Mr. Abbey's previous work was thought to prove him admirably fitted. Moreover, Boston prides herself upon her magnificent collection of Shakespeariana, boasting items which even Oxford Bodleian does not possess; and on what is called the "special library floor," there were to be rooms decorated in harmony with their contents. But this intention was thrown aside, and "The Sources of Modern Literature," as being even more comprehensive, took its place. So the sketches for the Shakespearian walls, the *Cid, Amadis of Gaul,* the *Song of Roland,* the *Niebelungen Ring*—all gave way to the *Holy Grail,* the earliest and most popular of all the legends of Christendom.

It was not Mr. Abbey's aim merely to paint *The Quest of the Holy Grail* based on any one authority; he desired, if possible to find, so to say, the greatest common denominator of the numerous legends, and then to fit them into a given number of spaces. The task was not an easy one, but study, ingenuity and keen artistic perception availed to overcome it. We have here, then, it would seem, the result of the study of such works as *Selections from the Hengwrt Mss.,* of Dr. Furnivall's *Roxburghe* volume on Harry Lonelich's rough metrical translation of *La Queste del Saint Graal,* of Hucher and of Alfred Nutt's *Studies in the Legend of the Holy Grail,* among the moderns, and of Walter Map, Chrestien de Troyes, Wolfram von Eschenbach, among more ancient writers. Malory and, of course, Ten-

nyson were, doubtless, read, although the poetic versions of the two last have not been followed. As a result, Mr. Abbey has summarised the romance in a *cyclus* of his own, and has properly treated the whole subject as the great literary expression of the trials and the progress of the Human Soul. There is nothing original in this leading idea, but the painter has shown not a little invention in carrying it into execution, and many are the touches of genuine thought and artistic inspiration displayed in the realisation of his texts. Such, for example, may be found in the eighth picture, representing the Castle, in which the released Maidens are made to impersonate the Virtues.

By such means did Mr. Abbey give effect to his theory already alluded to, that an artist should, as far as may be, saturate himself with the spirit of the subject and surround himself with its atmosphere. In more concrete fashion he made such studies as would help him to realise that Twelfth Century in which he wisely determined to place the drama. He made many sketches in St. Michel, the ancient church of Le Puy in the Auvergne from which, tradition asserts, the First Crusade set forth. Capitals and carvings from Avignon, landscapes from Italy, "bits" gathered here and there among the ruins, for the legitimate and harmonious purpose of the work. Thus, by the time that he first put charcoal to canvas his mind was stored with story, fact, and scene, as far as goodwill and good sense could avail. And so he chose the Twelfth Century for his costumes, architecture and accessories, because the period synchronised with the birth

of the Romance, and perhaps because he never thought of transporting it into any other more picturesque period. But I doubt whether, after his recent visits to Italy, he would not rather have taken up the tradition of the decorations of Pinturicchio, or the stanze of Raphael, and of the frescoes in the Cambio of Perugia. The knowledge, however, of what later men have done must have rendered it impossible for such a man as Mr. Abbey. Burne-Jones found it possible, as the artist one day declared; and after a long while, and with infinite labour, got people to believe in his no-man's land, with its Leonardo basaltic rocks and its Botticelli seas; and his far-away subjects were the better for it. It was not in Mr. Abbey—fortunately—to paint a Fifteenth Century *Grail*. That which he beheld was two hundred years earlier; and, in truth, unless the work was to be executed in mosaic, no particular style or century was suggested by the legend on other than a historical basis. He admired the science of Tintoret, and the handling of the later masters of the Sixteenth Century and of their successors; and we can see their influence under what might be called the glaze of the artist's personality.

It is all very well to yearn after the *naïveté* of the Fifteenth Century; but it is less easy, even were it desirable, to realise it for Nineteenth Century matter-of-fact realism to criticise, and, perhaps, reject. Gustave Moreau showed us a little of the power; but what was modern in his work made the other part acceptable in the eyes of his admirers.

In simplifying somewhat the involved legend of the Holy

Grail, the artist had in view the pictorial demands of the task. What seems to be the chief example of this consists in the setting-up of Sir Galahad as the hero of the whole Arthurian cycle, and the endowing him with some of the adventures that properly belong to other knights. He is the perfect knight who alone is worthy of the reward of the Grail's successful quest, and he is the representative of the highest knightly virtue whose adventures are here followed with so much dramatic variety.

The first picture is perhaps the least effective of the whole set in black-and-white; but it strikes the note—the *leit-motif*—that is maintained and heard throughout the cycle. The child Galahad is in the charge of the holy women who tend him as he grows, and he is here visited by an angel who bears the veiled Grail. The sight of it—through its magic virtue—sustains without food the descendant of Joseph of Arimathea, and his saintly young life thus begun, continues without stain.

In the second design—a canvas eleven feet long—Galahad is keeping vigil before he receives his knighthood. Clothed in red, kneeling before the altar, he is attended by Launcelot and Boris, who fasten on his spurs, while the candles held by the attendant nuns contend with their softly glowing light with the cold dawn that steals through the chapel windows.

The third picture is instinct with the symbolism of the poem. It is the scene of the Arthur's Round Table made by Merlin, while Sir Galahad, amid the agitation of the

assembled and sympathetic knightly multitude and the retinue, is led forward by Joseph of Arimathea to take his place upon the Seat Perilous—on which none had hitherto been perfect enough to sit and live. But above the seat is magically suspended the legend that proclaims the young knight's worthiness; and round about floats the chorus of unseen angels that shed their rosy light, while the hundred and fifty knights assembled raise their sword-hilts in token of salutation. This great composition, not less than twenty-four feet long is full of learned detail and dramatic power, and the colour and illumination are managed with ease.

The kneeling knights, about to set forth upon the Quest, receiving the bishop's benediction, are the subject of the fourth picture. Sir Galahad is robed in red as always and the standards lend curious impressiveness to the dignity of the ceremony.

In the next, Sir Galahad finds himself in the great Castle of the Grail where, surrounded by his Court, lies Brons, the Fisher King, who cannot die, but who waits for the releasing question that Galahad should ask. For he should ask the meaning of the Procession of the Grail that we see passing on the right of the picture; but Galahad keeps silence, and his opportunity for many years is lost. This composition is not less than thirty-three feet long, and, like the others, only eight feet high. It is full of variety and interest; even of dramatic intensity, and, to my mind, is one of the most admirable of all.

The next pictures show: the head of the knight being

borne aloft on the charger, as Galahad had seen in the Procession of the Grail; the Fight with the Seven Deadly Sins; the Castle of the Maidens and their release; the Castle of the Grail, visited once more by Galahad who, this time, does not repeat his arrogant silence of years ago, and, so, breaking the fearful spell, confers the blessing of death upon the aged, hollow-eyed king, with whom pass away all the enchantments that had oppressed the land of Britain (in the original of Robert de Borron, of course Sir Percival and not Sir Galahad is the hero of this adventure); the episode of the Ship; and the fashioning and setting up of the Golden Tree.

Thus has Mr. Abbey dealt with his great cycle; and if he be accused of meddling with his text, it may be answered that none of the tellers of the Arthurian legends, from the first to the last, ever told the story as it reached him. To our artist belongs the distinction of having executed, so far as I am aware, the only elaborate mural painting of the greatest stories in Christendom—which is, perhaps, the more extraordinary as these romances are of the few that have belonged to the very blood of the people; and for ages have dominated the world of poetry and romance from Iceland to Gibraltar and from Ireland to Venice.

PORTRAIT OF HIS MOTHER

(J. McNeill Whistler)

GEORGE MOORE

I HAVE studied Mr. Whistler and thought about him this many a year. His character was for a long time incomprehensible to me; it contained elements apparently so antagonistic, so mutually destructive that I had to confess my inability to bring him within any imaginable psychological laws, and classed him as one of the enigmas of life. But Nature is never illogical; she only seems so because our sight is not sufficient to see into her intentions; and with study my psychological difficulties dwindled, and now the man stands before me exquisitely understood, a perfect piece of logic. All that seemed discordant and discrepant in his nature has now become harmonious and inevitable; the strangest and most erratic actions of his life now seem natural and consequential (I used the word in its grammatical sense), contradictions are reconciled and looking at the man I see the pictures, and looking at the pictures I see the man.

But at the outset the difficulties were enormous. It was like a newly-discovered Greek text, without punctuation or capital letters. Here was a man capable of painting portraits perhaps not quite so full of grip as the best work done by Velasquez and Hals, only just falling short of these masters at the point where they were strongest, but plainly ex-

Portrait of His Mother Whistler

ceeding them in graciousness of intention and subtle happiness of design, who would lay down his palette and run to a newspaper office to polish the tail of an epigram which he was launching against an unfortunate critic who had failed to distinguish between an etching, and a pen-and-ink drawing. Here was a man who, though he had spent the afternoon painting like the greatest, would spend his evenings in frantic disputes over dinner-tables about the ultimate ownership of a mild joke, possibly good enough for *Punch,* something that anyone might have said, and that most of us having said it would have forgotten! It will be conceded that such divagations are difficult to reconcile with the possession of artistic faculties of the highest order.

Mr. Whistler has shared his life equally between America, France and England. He is the one solitary example of cosmopolitanism in art, for there is nothing in his pictures to show that they come from the north, the south, the east or the west. They are compounds of all that is great in Eastern and Western culture. Conscious of this and fearing that it might be used as an argument against his art, Mr. Whistler threw over the entire history, not only of art, but of the world; and declared boldly that art was, like science, not national, but essentially cosmopolitan; and then, becoming aware of the anomaly of his genius in his generation, Mr. Whistler undertook to explain away the anomaly by ignoring the Fifth Century, B. C., in Athens, the Fifteenth Century in Italy the Seventeeth in Holland, and humbly submitting that artists never appeared in numbers like swal-

lows, but singly like aerolites. Now our task is not to disprove these statements, but to work out the relationship between the author of the *Butterfly Letters* and the painter of the portrait of *The Mother, Lady Archibald Campbell, Miss Alexander* and the other forty-one masterpieces that were on exhibition in the Goupil galleries.

If Mr. Whistler had the bull-like health of Michael Angelo, Rubens, and Hals, the *Letters* would never have been written. They were the safety-valve by which his strained nerves found relief from the intolerable tension of the masterpiece. He has not the bodily strength to pass from masterpiece to masterpiece, as did the great ones of old time. In the completed picture slight traces of his agony remain. But painting is the most indiscreet of all the arts, and here and there an omission or a feeble indication reveal the painter to us in moments of exasperated impotence. To understand Mr. Whistler's art, you must understand his body. I do not mean that Mr. Whistler has suffered from bad health—his health has always been excellent; all great artists have excellent health, but his constitution is more nervous than robust. He is even a strong man, but he is lacking in weight. Were he six inches taller, and his bulk proportionately increased, his art would be different. Instead of having painted a dozen portraits, every one—even the *Mother* and *Miss Alexander,* which I personally take to be the two best—a little febrile in its extreme beauty, whilst some masterpieces, though they be, are clearly touched with weakness, and marked with hysteria—Mr. Whistler would

have painted a hundred portraits, as strong, as vigorous, as decisive, and as easily accomplished as any by Velasquez or Hals. But if Nature had willed him so, I do not think we should have had the *Nocturnes,* which are clearly the outcome of a highly-strung, bloodless nature whetted on the whetstone of its own weakness to an exasperated sense of volatile colour and evanescent light.

In the *Nocturnes,* Mr. Whistler stands alone, without a rival. In portraits he is at his best when they are near to his *Nocturnes* in intention, when the theme lends itself to an imaginative and decorative treatment; for instance, as in the *Mother,* or *Miss Alexander.*

The portrait of the *Mother* is, as every one knows, in the Luxembourg; but the engraving reminds us of the honour which France has done, but which we failed to do to the great painter of the Nineteenth Century; and after much hesitation and arguing with myself I feel sure that on the whole this picture is the painter's greatest work in portraiture. We forget relations, friends, perhaps even our parents; but that picture we never forget; it is for ever with us, in sickness and in health; and in moments of extreme despair, when life seems hopeless, the strange magic of that picture springs into consciousness, and we wonder by what strange wizard craft was accomplished the marvellous pattern on the black curtain that drops past the engraving on the wall. We muse on the extraordinary beauty of that grey wall, on the black silhouette sitting so tranquilly, on the large feet on a footstool, on the hands crossed, on the long black dress that fills

the picture with such solemn harmony. Then mark the transition from grey to white, and how *le ton local* is carried through the entire picture, from the highest light to the deepest shadow. Note the tenderness of that white cap, the white lace cuffs, the certainty, the choice, and think of anything if you can, even in the best Japanese work, more beautiful, more delicate, subtle, illusive, certain in its handicraft; and if the lace cuffs are marvellous, the delicate hands of a beautiful old age lying in a small lace handkerchief are little short of miraculous. They are not drawn out in anatomical diagram, but appear and disappear, seen here on the black dress, lost there in the small white handkerchief. And when we study the faint, subtle outline of the mother's face, we seem to feel that there the painter has told the story of his soul more fully than elsewhere. That soul, strangely alive to all that is delicate and illusive in Nature, found perhaps its fullest expression in that grave old Puritan lady looking through the quiet refinement of her grey room, sitting in solemn profile in all the quiet habit of her long life.

The Portrait of Carlyle has been painted about an arabesque similar, I might almost say identical, to that of the Portrait of the Mother. But as is usually the case, the attempt to repeat a success has resulted in failure. Mr. Whistler has sought to vary the arabesque in the direction of greater naturalness. He has broken the severity of the line, which the lace handkerchief and the hands scarcely stayed in the first picture, by placing the philosopher's hat

upon his knees; he has attenuated the symmetry of the picture-frames on the walls and has omitted the black curtain which drops through the earlier picture. And all these alterations seemed to me like so many leaks through which the eternal something of the first design has run out. A pattern like that of the egg and dart can not be disturbed, and Columbus himself can not rediscover America. And, turning from the arabesque to the painting, we notice at once that the balance of colour, held with such exquisite grace by the curtain on one side and the dress on the other, is absent in the later work; and if we examine the colours separately we can not fail to apprehend the fact that the blacks in the later are not nearly so beautiful as those in the earlier picture. The blacks of the philosopher's coat and rug are neither as rich, nor as rare, nor as deep as the blacks of the mother's gown. Never have the vital differences and the beauty of this colour been brought out as in that gown and that curtain, never even in Hals, who excels all other painters in this use of black. Mr. Whistler's failure with the first colour when we compare the two pictures, is exceeded by his failure with the second colour. We miss the beauty of those extraordinary and exquisite high notes—the cap and cuffs; and the place of the rich, palpitating greys, so tremulous in the background of the earlier picture, is taken by an insignificant grey that hardly seems necessary or helpful to the coat and rug, and is only just raised out of the commonplace by the dim yellow of two picture frames.

More than any other painter Mr. Whistler's influence has

made itself felt on English art. More than any other man, Mr. Whistler has helped to purge art of the vice of subject and belief that the mission of the artist is to copy nature. Mr. Whistler's method is more learned, more co-ordinate, than that of any other painter of our time; all is preconceived from the first touch to the last, nor has there ever been much change in the method, the painting has grown looser but the method was always the same; to have seen him paint at once is to have seen him paint at every moment of his life. Never did a man seem more admirably destined to found a school which should worthily carry on the traditions inherited from the old masters and represented only by him. All the younger generation has accepted him as master, and that my generation has not profited more than it has, leads me to think, however elegant, refined, emotional educated it may be, and anxious to achieve, that it is lacking in creative force, that it is, in a word, slightly too slight.

PLOUGHING IN THE ENGADINE

(*Giovanni Segantini*)

HELEN ZIMMERN

SEGANTINI stands in the front rank of modern Italian painters; indeed, in some respects he stands at the very head of them—that is to say, in the treatment of the subjects he has made his own particular province. What Millet did for France, Giovanni Segantini has done for Italy—that is he has devoted his art to the cause of the poor and lowly, and has faithfully depicted the life of the peasants, not dressed in their best with conventional, smiling faces, obviously sitting for their portraits, like *tableaux vivants,* but peasants in their daily existence, in work and sorrow and joy, with the unheeded tragedy and unconscious poetry of the simple peasant life. And he does not paint, moreover, as one who has studied his subject from outside, for a time, but he lived amongst the poor, as one of them, from his childhood, the poor of the city and the village; and when he became a man with means to do as he pleased he chose to make his home amongst the isolated dwellers in the Alpine hamlets, where life is rude and hard, and where man has not yet succeeded in enslaving and vilifying nature.

Segantini was born at Arco, in the Trentino, in 1858. His mother, who died when he was five years old, belonged to one of those ancient families of the mountain districts

from which in former times sprang the soldiers of fortune, and now the best agriculturists; his father was a plain man of the people. Being left a widower, the father moved to Milan, where lived a son and daughter of his first marriage. Affairs were not flourishing, and the father and elder son soon departed to seek their fortunes elsewhere, leaving little Giovanni in the care of his half-sister. They lived in two attics, and the sister went to work early in the morning, leaving the child to his own devices, something to eat within reach, and forbidding him to go out, yet neglecting to provide anything in the way of occupation either for hands or mind. What wonder if the active baby got into one scrape after another. Yet during the period of imprisonment he made his first acquaintance with brushes and colours. They were only the implements of white-washers and house-painters certainly, but they formed an epoch in his childish history; and when the interest in the actual process had waned, he found an enthralling fascination in the damp patches on the half-dry wall; for in these marks his fancy saw the outlines of men and scenes and animals—even the semblance of the father he still waited and longed for, but who never returned from his fortune-seeking travels. At last a change came. One day the child overheard two women talking of a youth who had journeyed into France on foot and there made his fortune; the thought struck him that if that boy had found it possible to leave Milan, why should not he? So he watched his opportunity one fine morning, and slipping out of the house he set off on his way to France, having for sole provision a

Ploughing in the Engadine — Segantini

piece of bread he had obtained from the baker's on credit. He tramped on till dusk and weariness and a storm of rain overcame his childish courage, and lying down beneath a tree he remembered nothing more until he was awakened by two men who, passing with their cart, had noticed the drenched and sleeping boy, and these friends in need took him home to their cottage where he was dried and fed and told his little story. On hearing that he was an orphan, these poor but kindly peasants determined to keep him with them, on condition, however, that he made himself useful; and so when barely seven years old, Giovanni Segantini began to earn his own living in the responsible position of a swineherd.

But the long hours of idleness were not wasted; he took note of his new surroundings, and instinctively tried to reproduce them, scrawling his pictures on walls and stones, like a new Giotto. At last his occupation was noticed, it came even to the ears of the syndic, and the little swineherd was straightway looked on as an infant prodigy, and was sent back to Milan to have his talent taught and fostered. Whilst studying in the Brera he was painting his first picture, which not only won for him the admiration and respect of his colleagues, but procured him the means of leaving the Academy and obtaining wider teaching and experience. This picture was the *Coro di Sant' Antonio;* it represented part of the interior of a church, the light from a large window illuminating the stalls and falling upon an old picture, bringing into prominence its faded figures, while a little choir boy

gives life to the scene. It was a strong and remarkable work for a beginner, and the vigour here displayed was to prove the permanent distinguishing mark of Segantini's art. He was so poor that he was compelled to use as canvas the back of an old fire-screen, whilst his colours were obtained from a friendly grocer in return for painting a shop sign with a sugar loaf and other emblems of the trade. A critic of that time wrote that " Segantini's art is full of attractive elements and of defects, of deficiencies and exuberances—in short, it is the sum total of a talent that has all the expansiveness and all the audacity of careless and robust youth, of a genius that has developed out of its own strength, unhampered by scholastic principles which too often modify the originality of inspiration, and at times even suffocate it." The words hold true to this day. He now began to shake off the conventionality of the Brera School, and after the success of his first picture he exhibited others such as *Galloping Consumption* and *Il Naviglio,* which drew down on him the scorn of the conventional art-critics. But Segantini did not care; he was painting according to his own ideas and theories, and his one desire was to get away from Milan to some quiet place where he could work in his own way. The city seemed to stifle him, and, moreover, his constitutional shyness made him long to be alone. He had taken a studio for himself, where he painted amongst other things, *La Falconiera* and *Prode,* but he did not stay there very long; he left Milan and settled in the Brianza, that beautiful piece of country between Milan and Lake Como. Here it was

that he began to study country and peasant life, and in pursuit of his studies he roamed on foot all over these lovely semi-Alpine regions. The pictures he produced were not wholly landscapes, in spite of the absolutely rural life he led; he looked at a landscape merely as the background and setting for his figures, the surroundings for the soul of his pictures. Segantini's most important work painted at Brianza was *Alla Stanga,* a wide evening landscape with cattle brought from pasture to the milking-place. Although all these subjects might be termed every-day and even commonplace, they are treated with an ideality that lifts them far above the usual rank; for, as Segantini himself says: "Art without ideals is like nature without life."

It so happened that about this time Segantini made his first acquaintance with the works of Millet; they were only the reproductions in a French magazine, but they made a deep impression on him; for here was an artist who had reached the aim he was striving after, who, like him, had lived with the peasants, and had immortalised their joys and sorrows in his art. But so afraid was Segantini of having his own individuality influenced that he did not keep the magazine long in his possession; the impression could not be effaced, nevertheless, and had its effect on Segantini's subsequent work. After this even Brianza seemed too much in the world to suit him, and he removed with his wife and children to Savognino in the Grisons, after a time going yet further into the Alpine heights and setting up his abode and studio at Maloja.

With all these actual changes there came a change, too, in the style of his work. Like the youth who gradually grows to manhood, much of the delicate grace of his art gave place to more strongly marked and powerful productions, as though he would make nature his own by sheer force. Amongst the best of the pictures he produced during this period are *The Drinking Trough,* which obtained a gold medal in Paris; *In the Sheepfold, The Shepherd's Income, At the Spinning-Wheel* and *Ploughing in the Engadine,* which won a gold medal at the Turin exhibition of 1892. He also continued his studies of the effects of light and in *Midday on the Alps* and *Winter at Savognino* gave a fine contrast, the latter painting being remarkable for the management of the different shades and gradations of white. To the finest of his works must also be reckoned *The Return to the Sheepfold* and *The Return to his Native Village.*

In all these representations of simple pastoral life Segantini has shown himself thoroughly in sympathy with his subject, and the note he has thus introduced into Italian art is one quite foreign to it. Of late, however, he has taken a new departure, and has several times adopted a symbolical style, suppressing details and embodying ideas.

It may be said that Giovanni Segantini has never been untrue to himself, never allowed the spirit of gain to overcome his artistic conscience. His smallest pictures are carefully studied and his constant advance in the matter of colour shows that he is aware of his limitations and tries to overcome them. He is not always complete master of technical

difficulties; the spirit of his picture sometimes makes him neglect the detail of form; his painting is unequal, being at times, even a little heavy, and his colouring, like that of Millet and the Milanese artist Cremona, whom he admired, is sombre; but as I have said, this is always advancing and clarifying itself as he works in the clear light of the Alps and seeks to reproduce those strong, clear mountain effects of air which cause all objects to stand out in sharp contour.

PORTRAIT OF WHISTLER

(*J. Boldini*)

CAMILLE MAUCLAIR

BOLDINI'S quick observation makes him excel in recording with a crisp stroke or a sudden relaxation the jerky nervousness of the modern women of the world whose tight steel corsets reveal their straight lines and curves beneath their shimmering garments. Painter of the body which he understands so well, Boldini follows its form in the dash of his design and he gathers and concentrates all of its lines and angles into a kind of synthesis with a mathematical precision that is almost disconcerting and with poses that are full of charm.

His graphic indication of the body is really a record of motion; his lines might be called arrows, fasces, rays springing from the shoulder or folds at the girdle and diverging from these points like the branches of a fan, with the inflection of a soft and thoroughly Italian languor. As if in fury the pencil darts its lines, and then the brush adds its learned and sensual touches.

Every dress painted by this artist seems to be a quickly opened fan. The lightning of his virtuosity extracts from the angles an expressive beauty. The line of Helleu's drypoint is graceful as the sweep of a swallow in the white and mottled sky of Japan, but Boldini's line is oblique and devoid

of curves. He paints women who are thin, with sharp elbows, straight shoulders, little heads with the hair dressed high, tall women who are too large and without throats, and whose muscles are tightened. They are lively, and restless, always ready to bound or skip; and who sit still with difficulty on the low sofas. The impatient foot in its black varnished shoe like a flash of lightning disperses the silken folds of the full skirt; the fingers toy with a plait; and the person is posed like a restless bird that has alighted only for a minute and is ready to fly away again. In the dilated pupils of the eyes you see the intoxication of recent morphine. Worldliness, charm, infantile vice, sinuous coquetry of the soul, budding desire, *ennui,*—all of these things scintillate in these beings—and none of these things are essential to real life.

Calm, with his face of an acetic preacher, the artist observes and expresses this vanity which flutters about with such elegance. What he best loves is to paint. He is a born painter; it is his passion and his breath of life. He feels this so strongly that he interests everybody instantly. Some critics have reproached him for what, after all, the models should be reproached—the faults that he seems to have are theirs. The painter sees justly: he is sincere and even very simple. He depicts some people as timid and without style. Why should his painting be timid; why should it lack style? Then it would lie and lose its charm, which is the extreme sincerity of the transcription. Boldini paints an aristocracy, which is diluted, mismated, com-

promised. He has seized the character of decadence, that grimacing and antipathetic grace, and he has produced astonishing documents of modernism. The aversion that his pictures inspire in certain temperaments is due to the faithful tenacity of his vision, the models are inspired with life and Boldini has the negative merit of an excellent actor who, beneath the habit of the villain in a melodrama makes himself hated because he plays too well and assumes the vices of the felon that he represents. Of all the painters of portraits of the living woman of the world, Boldini is the strongest. This artist perceives colours, forms and psychology and he renders them all. He respects character. He has a slight touch of caricature because he finds it in these women—he does not give any affectations nor useless raillery. He is veracious and persevering in the sense of what he is commenting upon; and this is how he comes to have style when his model has none. If his portraits when collected in one room seem a little disturbing on account of their zigzag motion, and insinuating and neurotic artificiality, we should remember that the originals are such. Let us denounce them but let us praise Boldini; for he has made us see them as they are.

Of his personal preferences he keeps silent. He effaces himself totally before the character of his models. It is probable that if they displeased him he would paint them with less force; and I do not doubt that he sometimes experiences difficulties. The ideal of this species of woman is to be painted more pompously, more falsely even than the

bold ones who go to Boldini, not to speak of those who demand to be painted with a powdered head-dress, or to loll in a gilt and richly upholstered arm-chair. Boldini must often be forced to refuse, with a mocking smile, certain requests for poses which would result in false representations of character. The careless shoulder-strap of a ball dress, half falling down the arm often reveals a projecting collar-bone and a thin and bony neck. The entire costume is careless and seems badly put together. There is disorder and insolence, a studied maladress as well as the suggestion of a young girl in the woman of the world that the bitter draughtsman has expressed with a measured irony, evading nothing. A mixture of *"canaille"* and *grand chic* in the personality, yet little or nothing of that Americanism that appears in La Gaudara or Helleu, a *verve* which is riotous with distinction, a *verve* not French, however, notwithstanding the influence of Manet and Degas, but very Italian—such is the aspect of Boldini and his models. The contrast between this decadence of his types and the healthfulness of his technique is curious. The painter remains natural and calm. That is one of his differences from the other portrait-painters of types of nervous elegance. Before all else, he is a colourist in black; not that black of mysterious shadow where from a recoil, entirely Whistlerian, the subject is undressing or half advances, but of black considered as a frank colour, seen in the full daylight. There are no mysteries nor suggestions in the work of Boldini. But he is a very fine painter. He can make the blacks scintillate like no-

body else. As for the portrait of Whistler, it is the only one that is a worthy representation of that great man.

The other effigies by Boldini were made for the love of painting, but this was done for love of Whistler; and it certainly is one of the masterpieces of modern art. The physiognomist of the neurotic gossips has known how to stare into and penetrate the masque of a singularly complex genius whom he admired and understood. It is Whistler from the crown of his head to the sole of his boots—his never-to-be-forgotten way of holding himself, his melancholy air, the disturbed forehead, the quiet elegance of his costume, the sardonic dandyism of his reticent courteousness—all this has been scrutinised, seized, and fixed in an admirable symphony of heavy black. This is a priceless document concerning Whistler: it is decisive in what concerns Boldini. Whoever has seen it will never be deceived regarding the true value of this artist.

The gallery of his portraits will be an incomparable essay on contemporary psychology, if a Stendhal could be resuscitated to produce such a daring book. Boldini is a master; if that word has a meaning on which we are still mutually agreed. He sets in motion with profound knowledge the logical and expressive elements of all painting, to the highest degree of any of our painters. And this great girdling arabesque which envelopes, rectifies and adorns the image of the present woman of the world is of vital and sometimes of sovereign charm. It requires thirty years of work to inscribe it with that delightfully light touch for a generation.

Harmonist of blacks, greys and whites, with sometimes a note of blue, rose, or tea-green, of an exquisite suggestion of varnish or pastel, his astute geometry and his nervous, bizarre and learned grace, Boldini has made portrayed what he alone can, and with the authentic manner of a great painter.

A DUTCH SEA PAINTER

(*H. W. Mesdag*)

M. H. SPIELMANN

THE headship of modern Dutch art belongs to Josef Israels on land and to Hendrik Wellem Mesdag on the sea. To many beyond the borders of Holland the names of no other living artists are so well known and so universally recognised—not even those of the brothers Maris. Robust, original, sincere in his observation and skilful in recording it, M. Mesdag takes his place without presumption and with the acquiescence of his fellow-painters.

Mesdag is one of the few banker-artists who have appeared to the world; indeed I know of but one other—Seymour, the poor caricaturist, whom in spite of all, misfortune dogged and drove him finally into self-destruction.

Born in Groningen in 1831, the son of a merchant and banker, he was brought up strictly to a commercial career, to which he remained faithful until after his marriage. Nevertheless, from the first he had shown something more than an aptitude for drawing; all his spare time he devoted to the pencil; he practised with diligence and took lessons, as Israels had done before him, from Buys. At the age of thirty-five, encouraged by his wife, he finally quitted the counting-house for the studio—or rather for that larger studio of nature, the open fields and highways of his country.

He threw himself into his art with feverish passion, and studied still-life and natural objects continuously, and with the humility and intense application of a Pre-Raphaelite brother. His hand guided by his natural talent, soon responded to the work, and in 1868, he exhibited in the towns of Holland and Brussels the first fruits of his labour. He was only an amateur as yet; still an amateur of the stamp of Seymour Haden and the Marchioness of Waterford; that is to say, a heaven-born artist for whom practice alone is required to transform him into a painter. He had begun comparatively late in life; so had Corot, so did Verheyden, so did Renouard, and others of his contemporaries; and with a genius so natural he was not long stayed in attaining the position at which he aimed. At first he was not appreciated in his own country. Brussels showed more encouragement; so to Brussels he went to live. But in the summer he spent his holiday at Norderney and saw the great North Sea spread out before him, palpitating under the breeze and dotted with the lumbering boats of the fisherfolk—so picturesque, so quaint, revealing in their heavy lines few of those sailing qualities with which they rival the luggers of Norfolk and Kent. This spectacle established his career: the sea was its destiny, and to it he determined to devote the practice of his art. For that purpose he settled in The Hague, and not long elapsed before he forwarded to the Paris Salon his *Breakers of the North Sea*—a work which brought him the amazement and delight of the gold medal and a letter of congratulation from Millet. He continued to paint the sea

under every aspect, and to study cloud-forms and all the landscapes of the sky by day and night, which he treats with such unsurpassed harmony of feeling in the whole series of his picture. The details of his boat-drawing were open to criticism by the sailor, and his handling had hitherto been somewhat tight, as might be expected from so mature a recruit. But facility was being rapidly conquered and practically had been almost obtained. Mesdag had the good sense to vary his sea studies with pictures of the surrounding landscape; and it must be confessed that some of his exquisite pictures of fishing-village and of street scenery in summer and under snow, and even of orchard trees white with blossom, are certainly not less charming, not less true, or well felt than the marine paintings with which he established his fame. But it is essentially as the pictorial historian of the North Sea coast of Holland that he appeals to us. He represents not only the sea, but the weather; he paints not only the wind, but the salt air itself. He shows us the people and their occupations at all seasons of the year—when the men work in fair, brisk weather under a clear sky or lie becalmed under the rays of the summer sun; when the snow is thick and boats are beached, or their black hulls lifted by the packed ice; when storm is brewing and luggers flying for safety before the wind. He can paint atmosphere as unerringly as he can paint sea, and the sea he shows us in every phase known to that shallow shore, all but its brilliancy flashing in the sun—the life of the mariners from Scheveningen to Katwyck he has studied and painted with vigour and virility,

infusing into his pictures a noble sympathy and a keen insight which to the foreigner, at least, is of hardly less account than the technical merits of the work itself.

There is never any doubt as to the meaning of Mesdag's work. In this quality he carries on admirably the tradition of his great ancestors in art. His realism is of a sturdy sort and his sense of composition an accomplishment natural rather than acquired. Deliberate in his methods and forceful in his expression, his pictures are deliberate and forceful too, and a sense of space and movement gives them life. His touch is somewhat rugged; the rather, I imagine, that emphasis of statement comes natural to him than because he has any express contempt for finish or delicacy of handling. Boldness is in his touch, and in all his pictures an absence of affectation which in these latter years of realistic and impressionistic art and *préciosité* is delightful and refreshing.

Although Mesdag knows the sea and represents it more sympathetically than any Dutchman before him, it is idle to contend, as M. Zilcken does, that his knowledge and achievement would exceed that of any recent master—if any other sea-painter could be said to exist. Of the general character and conduct of the sea round about the shores of Holland—yes; but of its details a little further off when its sandy grey or brown, or murky blue, give way to a thousand tints and waves cut into a myriad facets—emphatically no.

But it is enough for Mesdag to be what he is—the supreme master of his line. The sea as a mass he appreciates, and he can give us with unsurpassable truth its humours; but its

characteristic details are, if not beyond, at least outside, the range of his art. As Mr. Watts regards humanity so does M. Mesdag regard the sea—with a broad generalisation that suggests, though it does not specify, detail. As Courbet painted his *Wave*—and Mr. Whistler following him—so Mesdag the broad characteristics that have so fascinated him and have claimed the devotion of his life. Compared with him Schotel, Cuyp, and Backhuyzen were the mere dabblers in sea-knowledge, and Clarkson Stanfield a surface specialist in luminosity. Turner alone among our older painters could head him, for he could see the mass as well as the detail. De Loutherbourg, our first real sea-painter in England, was theatrical rather than truthful in his observation; but Turner, in this, as in all else, intensely sincere and earnest in his passion for truth, would have himself lashed to the mast that he might, without the risk of being washed overboard, study the tempest and watch sea and sky. The result he gave us in several of his mighty canvases, such as *The Slave Ship* and *The Calais Boat*. In these cases, it is true, he makes us feel that his first aim—fully attained—is to oppress us with the majesty of the storm, but in such a way as to impress us too with the artistry of his composition. With M. Mesdag, we feel rather, with him, the tyranny of the waters over the poor fisher-folk who eke out a precarious livelihood on its treacherous bosom; and when we see them calm and blue lapping gently the sides of the battered boats that take their rest in them—even when we see their grey streaks dimly shining under the misty rays of the rising sun—our thoughts

are always those of the sailors whose home they are. M. Mesdag's seas are the domain of the Dutch fishermen—their hunting ground and their cemetery—loved perhaps by the men, but feared, with good reason, by the women. Herein lies one of the chief charms of M. Mesdag's art; it is as human as it is sincere. Moreover, the excellence of his seas is matched by the massive grandeur of his skies. Frequently he adds a subtlety of lightning, effects rather felt than seen, by which his pictures are lifted into the front rank. It is this power that elevates the painter into the artist. The sentiment is not only true, it is modern and intensely national in character, and it is raised by its individuality and originality from any suspicion of conventionality.

There are few moods of the sea that M. Mesdag has not recorded. His aim is not so much perfection of technique as the faithful record of the emotion aroused in himself. Herein, I believe, he succeeds completely—he is the Millet of Holland—a little more materialistic, perhaps, and less exquisite in colour, but as true to nature as Old Crome, or Constable, Morland or Segantini, or whoever else you like to whom the intention of realisation came before idealisation as the first duty of art.

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL

(*Jean-Charles Cazin*)

WILLIAM A. COFFIN

THE Cazins belong in Samer, in the department of Pas-de-Calais. Jean Cazin, grandfather of the artist, was born there in 1746. His father, François-Joseph Cazin, born at Samer in 1789, made the campaigns of Napoleon from 1805 to 1813, and was a surgeon in the dragoons. Jean-Charles Cazin was born at Samer, May 25, 1841. When he was only five years old, in 1846, the three generations covered a century. His studies in his youth were directed toward the profession of medicine; for it was intended that he should be, like his forebears, a physician. But while pursuing his medical studies in Paris, at about the age of nineteen, he determined to take up the pursuit of art, and entered the school of Lecoq de Boisbaudran. He studied also with Barye, and made drawings of the animals at the Jardin des Plantes. A young woman who was a pupil in a school directed by Mme. Rosa Bonheur, was working under Barye at the same time, but separately, and M. Cazin had not the pleasure of knowing her. He met her afterward, however, and she became his wife. I may refer here briefly to Mme. Cazin's position as an artist. Her work both in painting and in sculpture is very well known in

Hagar and Ishmael Cazin

Europe, and is of most sympathetic quality and positive merit. She is especially clever in her work in pastel, and her pictures, something like those of her husband in general intent and compass, bear a distinctive character that is entirely personal. At Berck-sur-Mer there is a monument to M. Cazin's brother, and the pedestal, as well as the sculptured group, is the work of Mme. Cazin. The monument is signed by her both as sculptor and architect. Mme. Cazin received an honourable mention for her work at the Salon of 1885, and a medal of the first class at the Universal Exposition of 1889. Their son, J. M. Michael Cazin, is an artist who sometimes paints pictures, but is best known as an etcher.

M. Cazin's first picture was a study of his father's library at Samer. It is now in the Museum of Boulogne, and he says it compares well with his later work. The fact that it does bears testimony to the sincerity of his painting from the very beginning. He exhibited pictures in the Salons of 1864 and 1865, and for the following five or six years devoted himself to teaching at Paris and Tours. From 1871 to 1875 he spent most of his time in England, Holland and Italy, and during this period was engaged in making artistic faience both in England and in France. Mr. Cazin, wherever he found himself and whatever might be his occupation, during these years, was making his "notes," and trying various experiments in methods and processes of painting. He expresses himself with facility in a number of mediums—oil painting, pastel, water-colour, combinations of pastel and wax, and modelling in clay and painting for the kiln. In

all of his work the decorative sentiment is pronounced, and appears as a factor in the first importance in the *ensemble,* considered either from the point of view of line or from that of colour.

It was about 1879-80 that the high quality of M. Cazin's work was generally taken note of by the public. He had exhibited in the Salons of 1877, 1878 and 1879; and for his two pictures in the Salon of 1880—*Ishmael,* placed soon afterward in the Luxembourg Gallery, and *Tobit,* now in the Museum of Lille—he received a first-class medal. The decoration of the Legion of Honour was conferred on him in 1882, and he was made an officer of the order in 1889. He was a member of the jury for fine arts at the Universal Exposition of 1889, and one of the founders of the *Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts,* which holds the "new Salon" at the Champ de Mars. It was owing to his suggestion that the society includes in its annual exhibitions objects of art not classed as painting or sculpture, and which include the productions of isolated workers in metal and ceramics. Few of his pictures found their way to the United States until 1884 or 1885; but of late years few other French artists have obtained greater recognition from American amateurs, and in the exhibition of one hundred and twelve of his works at the galleries of the American Art Association in New York in 1893, sixty-eight were lent by American owners in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and other cities.

Now that Corot, Daubigny and Rousseau are gone, there are two painters (three, if you include Claude Monet),

whose names one is apt to mention first in speaking of landscape-painting in France—Harpignies and Cazin.* Harpignies is a much older man than Cazin, and his renown dates back to Daubigny's time. He is a master of form, and has long been a force in the development of landscape painting, and much of what is best in it now is traceable to his influence, especially in regard to drawing and composition.

Cazin, on the other hand, is a colourist. He is not a colourist in the sense that Delacroix is, for his colour-schemes are modified by the attenuating quality of atmospheric effects. He is more sensitive and refined than Delacroix, and more nearly resembles Millet, though his gamut is simpler and much diversified in detail. His colour-schemes are invariably quiet and reserved; and though contrasts and the counterplay exist, they are so subdued as not to attract attention to themselves. They are effective in the best sense of the word, because they make themselves felt only in the *ensemble*. Speaking generally, I do not think M. Cazin's pictures of daytime effects are so distinguished in colour as those which depict evening or night. Tenderness in painting is a dangerous attribute, which in the hands of a man who lacks a certain sturdiness of temperament becomes mere sweetening. M. Cazin is not without this sturdiness, and it pervades his best work. The lack of it is most noticeable in effects of sunlight, where blue skies, green grass and yellow grain-fields, under his hand, lose something of their frank brightness. Daubigny treated such effects uncompromis-

* Died, 1901.

ingly. Monet delights in their vividness and even exaggerates. M. Cazin softens them in the attempt to escape the glare, and sometimes his interpretations are a trifle too tidy.

Some of the very best of M. Cazin's works are pictures in which he introduces figures. Certainly no two pictures by him are more deservedly celebrated than the *Ishmael* and the *Judith—the Departure*. Neither has been seen in the United States. Both may be properly called figure compositions, and yet in both the landscape is much more than a background or setting for the figures. Landscape and figures are treated as component parts of a harmonious whole, in which every note of colour has its proper place and its proper strength.

In the *Ishmael* we see Hagar and her son in a barren waste of sand-hills, with patches of herbage growing here and there, and in the distance the line of a forest. There are rosy, half-burnt-out clouds in the sky, such as often appear at the close of a hot, dry day, and Hagar sits, tired and disconsolate, on the ground. She has left Ishmael beside a clump of bushes, not wishing to see him die; but the angel appears and she sees a spring bubble at his feet, and understands that succour has come. This picture presents a fine colour-harmony, in which the bluish gown of Hagar, the white robe of the angel, the pale tones of the sandy desert and the evening sky, are admirably held together. It cannot be said that the figures are given prominence at the expense of the landscape; and yet the landscape, while impressing us as beauti-

fully simple and true, does not detract from the interest felt in the personages in the dramatic scene.

For his landscapes M. Cazin chooses the simplest of motives, and delights in rendering passing effects. Quiet evening skies over hill and plain, a cottage on the moors at twilight, the blue vault of heaven and the stars at night, moonlight falling on white walls and casting mysterious shadows on the village road, the moon rising through misty clouds over the sea, form the subjects that he uses over and over again, but in each there is something that makes it different from every other.

A TENNIS PARTY

(John Lavery)

DAVID MARTIN

INTENSELY earnest in all the work he has done from the first picture he painted and exhibited, something like twenty years ago, Lavery has passed through one or two phases which amply prove how strong is his love for Art, and how remarkable is his technical power to-day, although it has not even yet received full recognition. His work is the outcome of natural gifts, in conjunction with continued application and careful study. He has ever looked for the uncommon and presented it in his work; and, be it a portrait, a landscape, or a mere sketch of some incident in nature, devoid, perhaps of subject interest, the point of selection is always evident, and the work made interesting by the artist's interpretation. There is movement either of life or colour in all the touches, and constant grace of composition. His colour-schemes are always charming and refined, and in some of his pictures he has employed a primary note with unerring effect—introduced, in fact, with such subtlety that it has pronounced him gifted beyond doubt as a fine colourist. He has always shown capable powers of draughtsmanship, and displayed an exceptionally painter-like quality of brushwork in his pictures, imparting to them a feeling of spontaneity and elegance which make them attractive alike to an artist,

A Tennis Party — Lavery

or to a lay picture lover. It would appear when looking at many of his pictures, particularly the more recently finished, as if they had been painted right off at one sitting, and had come from his brush without the slightest effort.

Impressed and influenced by Whistler, and by the work of Velasquez, it may be said that he has derived great benefit from both masters; but it can also be added safely that it is an influence only, not an imitation. He retains an individuality that has always been evident in his work from the earliest, and not a transient style which is here to-day and away to-morrow, as his mind became impressed with this or that picture. Lavery was born in Ireland, but has long since been resident in Scotland, with the exception of a few years, beginning in 1881, when he studied in Paris. He was a pupil of Bouguereau and Tony Robert Fleury. In 1883, while studying at Julien's *atelier,* he painted *Les deux Pêcheurs,* which he sent to the Salon, where it was hung on the line and purchased by a Parisian sculptor—both honours being highly appreciated by the young artist. Continuing from this first success at the Champs Elysées, he was represented every year at the Old Salon until he associated himself with the artists who contributed to the Salon, Champ de Mars, to which galleries he has since been a regular and prominent contributor.

In 1887 Lavery painted a remarkably fine picture, entitled *A Tennis Party,* which he exhibited first at the Royal Academy. The following year it was sent to the Salon, Champs Elysées, and there attracted the favourable attention of artists

and critics and was awarded a gold medal. Latterly the picture was in a Munich exhibition from whence it was purchased by the authorities for the National Pinakothek. The subject of the *Tennis Party* was a very characteristic one for Lavery, as it offered a motif such as he delights to paint, and one wherein the prominent qualities of his style could be admirably demonstrated. He secured graceful pose and movement in the figures, with sparkle of sunlight and shadow in the artistic composition of his landscape. The picture shows lawn tennis players on a green sward, with a number of people looking on—some seated, some standing, the whole group ablaze with sunlight, against a background of trees, heavy with foliage, in shadow. In colour, the picture is very agreeable, being a scheme of warm-toned white with green.

A long list of pictures by Lavery might be given, but mention need only be made of some of the more prominent, such as *The Bridge at Gretz,* painted while he was staying at that quaint little French village, which was shown at the International Exhibition in Paris, and awarded a medal; *Ariadne,* a study of a nude figure against the blue sea, very beautiful in style, line and colour; the large picture of the *State Visit of Her Majesty to the Glasgow Exhibition,* which proved a great success, and in the painting of which he had to make many portrait studies of the celebrities who were present at the function. The canvas for this picture is about fourteen by nine feet, and it is now placed in the city collection at Glasgow; *Dawn, 14th May, 1568,* an historical

theme, is treated entirely different from the usual style of such subjects. It represents Mary, Queen of Scots, resting in the wood after the battle of Langside. *Croquet,* a party of young folks playing the game on a pleasure-ground overlooking the blue sea. Full in colour and the effect of sunlight, *An Irish Girl* was one of those graceful studies which he paints so artistically; and from this time onward he devoted more time to the painting of portraits, especially of ladies, for the pictorial presentment of which his artistic sympathies are so happily in keeping. In fact, it is perhaps more by his power of portraying fair women that Lavery has reached such a high place; for combined with his artistic knowledge he has a refinement and power of selection that go far to make his portraits so delightful and gracious. Lavery has spent some time in Spain, and later has resided in Rome. He is a hard worker and the long record he has already made of capable work will be further added to in the future.

ROUEN CATHEDRAL

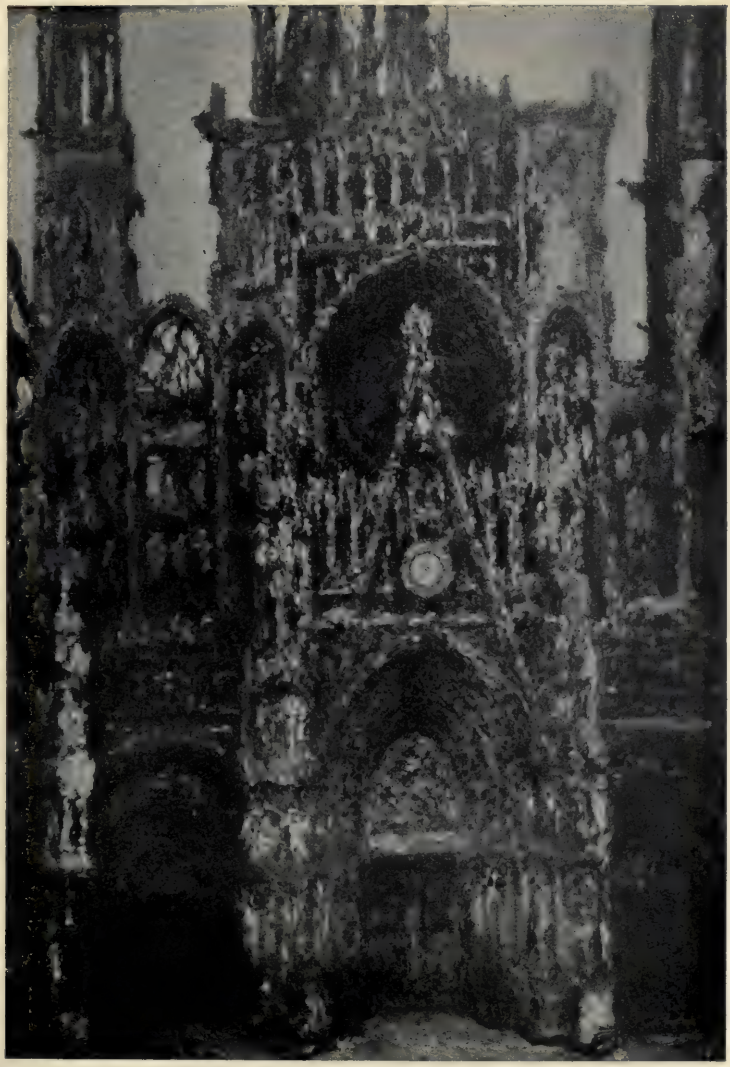
(*Claude Monet*)

WYNFORD DEWHURST

BORN in Paris, November 14, 1840, the son of a well-to-do merchant of Havre, Claude Monet early showed evidence of a strong artistic nature, which, as usual, met with little encouragement at home. None of his ancestors had been similarly gifted, and the thing was as new as it was disconcerting to his bourgeois parents. Art will out, however: the invariable reply of the scion Monet to parental remonstrance was: "*J' aimerais peindre comme l'oiseau chant.*" The intended distraction of foreign travel resulted only in imbuing the wayward youth with still greater love and reverence for the Arts, and more firmly fixing his ambition to practice them professionally. So the inevitable was accepted; serious study and preparation went on quietly for some years in Paris and elsewhere.

No stirring adventures by flood and field have marked Monet's career. It has been that of a man of high purpose, prodigiously talented, excessively active and self-reliant, who has turned neither to the right nor to the left from the path of achievement of his ideals.

His first exhibited works at the Salon were, I believe, in 1865, and entitled *Embouchure de la Seine* and *La Pointe*



Rouen Cathedral Monet

de la Hève à Marée Basse, and the last in 1880, *Lavacourt.* Later, in 1882, he sent *Glaçons sur la Seine,* a remarkably beautiful conception of amazing illusory effect, the rejection of which led to the final breaking off of all relations between the painter and that too conservative institute.

Finding no other country so variedly picturesque, or so atmospherically suitable, as his own beloved *"belle France,"* the principal scenes of Monet's labours have been Havre, Belle-Isle-en-Mer, The Riviera, La Creuse, La Manche and the Seine and Giverny in particular.

These places, together with work done during occasional short visits to England, Norway and Holland, have seen the production of these now celebrated suites of *chefs d'oeuvres* known as *Les Meules, Peupliers au Bord de l'Epte, Glaçons sur la Seine, Matins sur la Seine, à Argenteuil, Belle Isle, Bordighera, Antibes, Champs de Tulipes, Les Cathédrales,* the series of pictures done in the painter's own Japanese water garden at Giverny, and entitled *Water Lilies* and *Green Bridges,* together with *The Thames* and *London* under aspects various.

As Impressionism is the quintessence of Art appealing only to the intelligent, so it requires for its successful manifestation, the cultivation to the highest degree, of the analytical and synthetical faculties, together with an expression of the strongest spiritual emotion and *élan.* Its object is to picture an abstract or *résumé* of the general aspect of any scene or object, rather than the mere photographic delineation of actual observed fact. Impressionists draw more by the mod-

elling of the mass than by lines and spots. Above all, their endeavour is to adequately realise the infinitely beautiful, ever-changing effects of atmosphere. They affirm the sovereignty of light.

Modern painters acknowledge that the sun shines for them also, that he is in fact their greatest benefactor, and no longer to be treated as the arch-enemy which, until quite recent years, the masters would have us believe him to be.

Before the days of Constable, Bonnington and Turner, you will search the museums in vain for any proof, in the works therein, of consideration of light for light's sake, or of any enjoyment or appreciation of the poetry of the sun. Following these three Englishmen, and logically developing ideas only by them foreshadowed, came the men of 1830 in France—Rousseau, Corot, Diaz, Daubigny, Millet, etc.,—whose principal love, however, was for the pearly greys of early morn and the mystery of the gloaming, eschewing any attempt to represent trees, rocks, seas, rivers and what not, in the full blaze of a noonday sun.

Then came other disciples of sun worship—such men as Degas, Jongkind, Fantin-Latour, Manet, Bracquemond, etc., whose experiments and discoveries paved the way for the evolution of a new and exquisite art, which has reached its highest development in the works of Monet, Cézanne, Anquetin, Signac, Pissarro, Sisley, Renoir, Mary Cassatt, Berthe Morisot and many others. No narrow creed is theirs, unbounded the scope of their ambition. Joy and glory in the limitless domain of Nature, a universal sympathy is one

of their most distinguishing characteristics. Be their subject found in the record of a humble field of cauliflowers, the ambient glow of an Alpine sunrise, the ruddy sheen of an orchard's spoils, the livid gloom of a storm-swept ocean, the dull physiognomy of a toil-worn peasant, or the portrait of a society belle, it is all alike to them. The world is their dominion, the elements their inspiration.

Just as the pictures of these *Luminarists* are things apart, immediately distinguishable, wheresoever met with, so is the technical method of their production extraordinary. They are consummate draughtsmen, these Impressionists, as years of academic study, immense life-sized figure subjects, exhibited at world-renowned salons, innumerable portraits, etchings and pastel-drawings fully attest. They are in every way a fully equipped and intellectually capable body of men. Firstly they renounced the use of all blacks, browns or ochre colours, retaining only those nearest approaching the prismatic tints; the simpler a composition the more it appeals to them, whilst the superfluities, the blots and flaws of nature are rigorously suppressed.

Monet's palette, for instance, is composed as follows: Flake and zinc white in equal proportions, three tints of yellow (chrome), vermilion, two tints of madder lake, cobalt blue, emerald green and vert émeraude. "Heavens! what a dangerous combination!" exclaim our professional readers. Yet pictures painted by these specially prepared colours, in the hands of a past master, are to-day as brilliant as the moment they left his easel, twenty years ago; so all is well.

He uses white canvas, and finishes a work as he begins it—"*en plein air.*"

Values and envelopment are specially studied. Flat tints having been found insufficient, these Impressionists made the great discovery (which alone renders painters for ever indebted to them), that strong light dissolves tones, that the sun's rays, reflected by objects, tend, from their very strength, to dissipate the prismatic tints; and that by the juxtaposition of pure colour only, could sunlight effects be adequately rendered. Observe the effect of landscape in the full natural colouration of a grey day, the painter-student's ideal, and the same scene illuminated to discolouration by the sun's too powerful rays.

In the utilisation of this discovery, extraordinary results have been achieved. We see in Impressionist pictures an unconventionalised rendering of nature. We almost feel the vibration and palpitation of light and heat; they are fresh, radiant, and sweet as a nosegay of spring flowers, and give a marvellously deceptive appearance of open air and movement, which must be seen to be believed.

Claude Monet will rank as one of the world's greatest landscapists—as the one who, above all compeers, has revealed the transcendent beauty of atmospheric effect in its rarest moods, howsoever manifested: on rocks, skies, trees, seas, or architecture; on fogs, snows, crowded street or moving train; of all and above all he gives us a true and beautifully poetic impression.

Where all are of such excellence, so novel, unconven-

tional and epoch-making, it is indeed difficult to name the ultra-fine, the *chef-d'oeuvre,* upon which can safely be staked, not only the artist's reputation, but also the demonstration of Impressionism triumphant.

Personally, I believe that the Giverny work may easily be relied upon to fulfil these requirements; add to this the *Cathédrales* of Rouen, and you have such a galaxy of talent, such overwhelming proofs of genius, as will convince the most sceptical. Is it not natural that Giverny should inspire the finest harvest?—for here, after years of experimental residence elsewhere, Monet finally established himself in 1883, and is surrounded and encouraged by a numerous and loving family circle. Such works as the following could only have been produced by a strongly sanguine temperament; their dominant note is joy in the beauty of life and nature, whilst in them all is felt the true inspiration of highest art.

Monet never forgets that Beauty is the mission of Art and he depicts neither the ugly nor the morbid—both are alike foreign to his nature as to his taste.

Les Meules, or *The Haystacks,* exhibited for the first time at the Durand-Ruel Galleries in May, 1891, are impressions of a very simple, homely subject. Nothing more than a couple of haystacks, noted by chance in a neighbour's field, standing out in relief against the distant hillside. Upon these a whole year's labour was spent, resulting in the creation of a score of picture poems, as novel in conception as unapproachable in style. The artist watched and painted from these haystacks in the making, followed and noted the

atmospheric effects upon them at morn, noon and night, spring, summer, autumn and winter through. They are portrayed, dew-pearled, sun-baked, fog-folded, frost-berimmed, or buried in snow: each a distinct picture, telling unmistakably the tale of its inception and each a masterpiece of beauty, truth and form.

Closely following *Les Meules* came *Les Peupliers,* exhibited in March, 1892. They differ from "the haystacks" in this, that whilst the former recounted the history of the four seasons, this series of poplars showed us their varying aspects under the atmospheric influences of almost a single day. The subject is again of the simplest. A rivulet sluggishly meandering through marshy ground, seven great Normandy poplars face us, mirrored in the turgid waters; whilst the rest of the serried columns of elegant trees lose themselves in the distance, ever diminishing, as they mark the sinuous course of the stream. Crowning these rows of pollarded tree-stumps floats a mass of leafy verdure. No nobler subject, or more gracefully composing landscape lines, could have been imagined; they are rare poems of the beauty of nature and of light.

In some of the pictures is visualised the dim light of early morn. Tree-trunks, leaves and grass, dark, obscure and water-logged; around and through them, and expanding on the icy water, floats a chill, whitey-blue mist; precursor of a lovely day, touched here and there with the gold of a rising sun.

Later the mists have cleared away, and the morning

breaks in full glory; details are visible; each dewdrop a diamond and each leaf a shimmering jewel; roseate tints abound, the fresh cool air is almost felt and the streamlet is glorified in sheens of silver and gold.

Then comes high mid-noon, unmistakable; the blue dome of hot, unclouded sky, reflected in deeper tone upon the placid waters beneath the ground and trees, dusty, lifeless, almost colourless; the vibrations of a heat-parched atmosphere are visible,—Nature has succumbed to a welcome siesta:

> "For now the midday quiet holds the hill:
> The grasshopper is silent in the grass;
> The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
> Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead;
> The purple flower droops; the golden bee
> Is lily-cradled. . . ." *Œnone.*

Again: night falls gently and solemnly upon the land, obscuring, as with a veil of rich and sombre colour, the trees, leaves and vaporous stream—then oblivion.

Who that has ever seen them can ever forget those admirable *Marines,* in which is so marvellously realised—"the throbbing, swelling, deeply sighing sea, the trickling rills of water that follow a retreating wave, the glaucous hues of the deep ocean, the violet transparency of the shadows over a sandy bottom, and all the transient glories of ever-changing colour, all the fairy-play of moving light?" Or the *Matins sur la Seine,* views painted from the river bank, from the

artist's houseboat anchored amidstream, or from the various islands of the backwaters between Vétheuil and Vernon? The handling is free, loose and masterly. The wind can assuredly blow through these trees, and birds perch upon the branches thereof, and the leaves rustle, whilst reflected in and around all is the radiant light of a spring morn. Never has Art suggested anything finer, daintier or more virile, never were ideas more frankly expressed, fresher or more brilliantly painted, than in these transcripts of the ever-beautiful river Seine.

Coming now to the group of effects *Les Cathédrales de Rouen,* exhibited at the Durand-Ruel Galleries in the spring of 1895, Monet writes to me:

"Les Cathédrales de Rouen je les ai faite avec le plus grand mal d'un fenêtre d'un magazin situé en face la cathédrale donc rien d'intéressant là si ce n'est le mal énorme que m'a donné cette oeuvre, que cela m'a pris trois années."

Despite the material difficulty involved in their production, Monet considers these to be his finest works, whilst, on the other hand, it is the series least understood or appreciated by the public.

Here were shown no fewer than twenty-five huge canvases; such a *tour de force* as only the greatest physical resources and indomitable resolution could have accomplished. In each and all is once again demonstrated the possession, by the painter, of eyes marvellously sensible to the subtlest modulation of light, and capable of the acutest analysis of luminous phenomenon. The façade of the ancient Norman church

is depicted rather by the varying atmospheric effects dissolved into their relative values of coloured molecules, than by any actual drawing of correct architectural lines. They are a truly marvellous and most uncommonly beautiful suite of pictorial visions; and it was very regrettable, and a rare chance lost, when the French government neglected to purchase them *en bloc,* or failing that, that no patriotic millionaire came forward to justify possession of his millions. They realised enormous prices, and are now dispersed to the four quarters of the globe.

DANSEUSE ETOILE

(*Edgar Degas*)

GEORGE MOORE

OF his family history it is difficult to obtain any information. Degas is the last person of whom inquiry could be made. He would at once smell an article, and he nips such projects as a terrier nips rats. The unfortunate interlocutor would meet with this answer: "I didn't know that you were a reporter in disguise; if I had, I shouldn't have received you." It is rumoured, however, that he is a man of some private fortune, and a story is in circulation that he sacrificed the greater part of his income to save his brother, who had lost everything by imprudent speculation in American securities. But what concerns us is his artistic, not his family history.

Degas was a pupil of Ingres, and any mention of this always pleases him, for he looks upon Ingres as the first star in the firmament of French art. And, indeed, Degas is the only one who ever reflected, even dimly, anything of the genius of the great master. The likeness to Ingres which some affect to see in Flandrin's work is entirely superficial but in the *Semiramis Building the Walls of Babylon* and in the *Spartan Youths* there is a strange fair likeness to the master, mixed with another beauty, still latent, but ready for efflorescence, even as the beauty of the mother floats

Danseuse Etoile Degas

evanescent upon the face of the daughter hardly pubescent yet. But if Degas took from Ingres that method of drawing which may be defined as drawing by the character in contradistinction to that of drawing by the masses, he applied the method differently and developed it in a different direction. Degas bears the same relation to Ingres as Bret Harte does to Dickens. In Bret Harte and in Dickens the method is obviously the same when you go to its root but the subject-matter is so different that the method is in all outward characteristics transformed, and no complaint of want of originality of treatment is for a moment tenable. So it is with Degas; at the root his drawing is as classical as Ingres's, but by changing the subject-matter from antiquity to the boards of the opera house, and taking curiosity for leading characteristic, he created an art cognate and co-equal with Goncourt's, rising sometimes to the height of a page by Balzac. With marvellous perception he follows every curve and characteristic irregularity, writing the very soul of his model upon the canvas. He will paint portraits only of those whom he knows intimately, for it is part of his method only to paint his sitter in that environment which is habitual to her or him. With stagey curtains, balustrades and conventional poses, he will have nothing to do. He will watch the sitter until he learns all her or his tricks of expression and movement, and then will reproduce all of them and with such exactitude and sympathetic insight that the very inner life of the man is laid bare. And that Degas may render fervidly all the characteristics that race, heredity and

mode of life have endowed his sitter with, he makes numerous drawings and paints from them; but he never paints direct from life. And as he sought new subject-matter, he sought for new means by which he might reproduce his subject in an original and novel manner. At one time he renounced oil-painting entirely and would only work in pastel or distemper. Then again it was water-colour painting, and sometimes in the same picture he would abandon one medium for another. There are examples extant of pictures begun in water-colour, continued in gouache, and afterwards completed in oils, and if the picture be examined carefully it will be found that the finishing hand has been given with pen and ink. Degas has worked upon his lithographs, introducing a number of new figures into the picture by means of pastel. He has done beautiful sculpture, but not content with taking a ballet-girl for subject, has declined to model the skirt, and had one made by the nearest milliner. In all dangerous ways and perilous straits he has sought to shipwreck his genius; but genius knows no shipwrecks and triumphs in spite of obstacles. Not even Wagner has tested more thoroughly than Degas the invincibility of genius.

If led to speak on the marvellous personality of his art, Degas will say: "It is strange, for I assure you, no art was ever less spontaneous than mine. What I do is the result of reflection and the study of the great masters; of inspiration, spontaneity, temperament—temperament is the word—I know nothing. When people talk about temperament it always seems to me like the strong man in the fair who straddles his legs and asks some one to step upon the palm of

his hand." Again, in reply to an assurance that he, of all men now working, whether with pen or pencil, is surest of the future, he will say, "It is very difficult to be great as the Old Masters were great. In the great ages you were great, or you did not exist at all; but in these days everything conspires to support the feeble."

No critic would dare to assert or even to suggest that Degas's art was greater than Ingres's; not, however, because such a belief might not find foothold in his soul, but because such suggestion would be unseemly. In truth the resemblance between the two men is very remote, and hardly to be understood by any one but an artist. Ingres relied entirely on purity and orderliness of line; the line is still pure in Degas; but it is petulant with curiosity. Ingres accepted classical composition; Degas has violated every rule of composition. Ingres accepted the subject-matter that the genius of antiquity has consecrated; Degas has introduced subject-matter heretofore deemed impossible in art. Bret Harte changed the scene from London to California, but others had or might have written of these miners without displaying any striking originality in choice of subject. Baudelaire is the only one I can name who did what Degas has done—that is, to tread, nay more, to walk firmly where none has walked before. It may be wise or unwise to do this, but artists will understand the almost superhuman genius it requires to take subject-matter that has never received artistic treatment before, and bring it at once within the sacred pale. To do this is usually the work of two or three generations. Baudelaire was the only poet who ever did this;

Degas is the only painter. Of all impossible things in this world to treat artistically the ballet-girl seemed the most impossible, but Degas accomplished that feat. He has done so many dancers and so often repeated himself that it is difficult to specify any particular one. But one picture rises up in my mind—perhaps it is the finest of all. It represents two girls practising at the rail; one is straining forward, lifting her leg into torturous position—her back is turned, and oh! the miraculous drawing of that bent back! The other is seen in profile—the pose is probably less arduous, and she stands, not ungracefully, her left leg thrown behind her, resting upon the rail. The arrangement of the picture is most unacademical; the figures are half way up the canvas, and the great space of bare floor is balanced by the watering-pot. This picture is probably an early one. It was natural to begin with dancers at rest; those wild flights of dancers—the *première danseuse* springing amid the *coryphées* down to the footlights, her thin arms raised, the vivid glare of the limelight revealing every characteristic contour of face and neck—must have been a later development. The philosophy of this art is in Degas's own words, *" La danseuse n'est qu'un pretexte pour le dessin."* Dancers fly out of the picture, a single leg crosses the foreground. The *première danseuse* stands on tiptoe, supported by the *coryphées,* or she rests on one knee, the light upon her bosom, her arms leaned back, the curtain all the while falling. As he has done with the ballet, so he has done with the race-course. A race-horse walks past a white post which cuts his head in twain.

The violation of all the principles of composition is the work of the first fool that chooses to make the caricature of art his career, but, like Wagner, Degas is possessed of such intuitive knowledge of the qualities inherent in the various elements that nature presents that he is enabled, after having disintegrated, to re-integrate them, and with surety of ever finding a new and more elegant synthesis.

After the dancers come the washerwomen. It is one thing to paint washerwomen amid decorative shadows, as Teniers would have done, and another thing to draw washerwomen yawning over the ironing-table in sharp outline upon a dark background. But perhaps the most astonishing revolution of all was the introduction of the shop-window into art. Think of a large plate-glass window, full of bonnets, a girl leaning forward to gather one! Think of the monstrous and wholly unbearable thing any other painter would have contrived from such a subject; and then imagine a dim, strange picture, the subject of which is hardly at first clear; a strangely contrived composition, full of the dim, sweet sad poetry of female work. For are not those bonnets the signs and symbols of long hours of weariness and dejection? and the woman that gathers them, iron-handed fashion has moulded and set her seal upon. See the fat woman trying on the bonnet before the pier-glass, the shop-women around her. How the lives of those poor women are epitomised and depicted in a gesture! Years of servility and obeisance to customers, all the life of the fashionable woman's shop is there. Degas says: "*Les artistes sont tellement*

pressés! et que nous faisons bien notre affaire avec les choses qu'ils out oubliées." ("Artists are always in such a hurry and we find all that we want in what they have left behind.") And so all artists and connoisseurs believe it will be with Degas. Within the last few years his prices have gone up fifty per cent.; ten years hence they will have gone up a hundred per cent.; and that is as certain as that the sun will rise to-morrow. That any work of his will be sold for twenty thousand pounds is not probable; the downcast eye full of bashful sentiment so popular with the uneducated does not exist in Degas; but it is certain that young artists of to-day value his work far higher than Millet's. He is, in truth, their god, and his influence is visible in a great deal of the work that strives to be most modern. But it must be admitted that the influence is a pernicious one. Some have calumniated Degas's art flagrantly and abominably, dragging his genius through every gutter, over every dunghill of low commonplace; others have tried to assimilate it honourably and reverentially, but without much success. True genius has no inheritors. Tennyson's parable of the gardener who once owned a unique flower, the like of which did not exist upon the earth, until the wind carried the seeds far and wide, does not hold good in the instance of Degas. The winds, it is true, have carried the seeds into other gardens, but none have flourished except in native soil, and the best result the thieves have obtained is a scanty hybrid blossom, devoid alike of scent and hue.

CHRIST BEFORE PILATE*

(*Michael Munkacsy*)

J. BEAVINGTON ATKINSON

THE lives of artists proverbial for adventure and vicissitude present but few parallels to the extraordinary career of this Hungarian painter. Michael Munkacsy, born in the year 1846, within gunshot of the famed old fortress of Munkacs, has risen to eminence not only from obscurity but from disaster. His family was ruined in the revolution of 1849: his father, a subordinate in the Austrian customs, joined the patriots under Kossuth, and in the reverses which followed on the Russian occupation was thrown into prison, fell sick and died. Young Michael barely four years old, and one of five destitute orphans, was adopted by an aunt, who, strange to relate, some short time afterwards, suffered death in her own house at the

The picture is a strong effort to present as it might have happened, one of the most dramatic scenes in the life of Christ. With great audacity, the artist has painted the scene in the entirely modern spirit of naturalism, abandoning traditional sentiment. It illustrates the gospel according to Renan. Christ as unglorified, a man of unusual, but not even exceptional temperament, sustained by intensity of purpose and belief in his destiny and mission through every ordeal—that is all. His type is not particularly fine or noble, or even benevolent; he stands in bold relief against the other human types in the picture because they are all strongly marked and antagonistic, not because of any

hands of a brutal band of robbers—such was the lawless state of Hungary in those days. An uncle next took charge of the boy; yet the revolution had left the family so penniless, that means were wanting for the merest rudiments of education, and so necessity compelled an apprenticeship at the age of eight to a village carpenter, a Jack-of-all-trades. This drudgery, which lasted for four years, was occasionally diversified by a thrashing when the boy, like many an embryo painter before, stole from work a stray half-hour for drawing. The weary years were further enlivened by such foretaste of art as painting the outside of a cottage, or decorating a bride's chest with flowers. After his appren-

divine or human majesty of presence. He is not a master of men, but he is—what none else in the picture is—master of himself. He is without anxiety or passion, watching Pilate with eyes that gaze through, rather than at, him, concerned with the mental conflict through which his judge is passing, rather than with the result as affecting himself. He is called Christ, but he might be a modern Communist.

In the vortex of human passions which whirls around this vivid and original Christ, there is no figure without individuality. Munkacsy's Pilate is a Roman, a judge, a gentleman with a conscience; his wealthy merchant is the incarnation of stolid worldly prosperity, his Caiaphas is commanding and eloquent, his nobles have an air of culture and breeding, his roughs are roughs indeed. Each of those who may be called the secondary characters in the composition has his physiognomy marked with some personal shade of malevolence, or envy, or indifference, or sheer brutality. The sea of fury is only broken by one little rock of sympathy, in the shape of a woman and child effectively introduced in the background. As a mere study of humanity, the picture is one of variety and strength.—*The Academy* (London, 1882).

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Christ Before Pilate

Munkacsy

ticeship, the youth, still in his teens, worked as a journeyman from five in the morning till night, at the scanty wages of five shillings a week. Yet outward poverty and hardship could not stifle inward aspiration. The village carpenter had a mind thirsting for knowledge; acquaintance was formed with students in a college: first, even reading and writing had to be learnt, then pleasing excursions were made into history and poetry. But the cravings of the intellect and imagination grew insatiable—evenings and nights were spent in devouring books, till at last as might be expected, the bodily health insufficiently sustained by food, gave way, and a violent fever put an end to work and study, at least for a time.

The poor youth felt a strong vocation; while watching a local limner at work, the idea suddenly flashed across his mind that he also was born a painter. The uncle, as a man of the world, held that an artist's profession was but a vagabond's calling. Nevertheless the townsfolk willingly sat for their portraits, and the humble painter was happy to receive in return a good dinner or a warm coat. Drawing lessons further added to the frugal fare; and such was the success of certain scenes of peasant life direct from nature, that the tyro determined to try his fortune in the metropolis of Pesth.

On his arrival at Pesth, his success surpassed the most sanguine expectations; and the artist elated by the money that came to his pocket, thought to launch himself on the wide world, and extended his wanderings to Vienna. But,

as might have been feared, the child of Hungarian patriots met with a cold reception, and, in truth, the untrained offshoot of naturalism could never have engrafted kindly into the old scholastic stock of the Viennese Academy.

Munkacsy, by reason of the hardships he endured, looked from the very first upon the shadow side of life; sorrow, as with the nation generally, was his joy; his eye saw the world in blackness, yet from the depths light and colour loomed; and so as Fuseli said of Rembrandt, this Hungarian aboriginal stands as the creator of a certain "magic combination of colour with *chiaroscuro.*" He is the son of martyrs, and his art, like a dirge or deep refrain, is as a people's wail, patriotic. Munkacsy, as is manifest, could not have attained his high position by sticking to his native land, and so, obedient to the wandering instincts of the races on the Danube, he makes frequent change in his local habitation, and thus in rapid succession has set up his easel in Pesth, Vienna, Munich, Düsseldorf and Paris.

Animated by the example of his countrymen Lietzen-Meyer and Wagner, he forsook Austria in favour of Bavaria. With twenty florins in his pocket he started westward and on reaching Munich vainly sought entrance into the famous school of Piloty, then said to be full; he was allowed, however, to visit the painting-class in the Academy, and he obtained friendly advice from the great battle-painter, Franz Adam. Altogether he must have had a hard time in Munich; he worked all day, and by lamplight at night in his small room served the lower sort of dealers,

and so managed to pay his way. But he did more. He strove for excellence rather than for bread; his pictures gained prizes, and thus after two years in Munich cash was in hand for his approaching move to Düsseldorf.

Yet on reaching Düsseldorf he did not seek the Academy; the professors of scholastic and religious art, such as Bendemann, Müller, Ittenbach and Deger, could not open to him any door by which he cared to enter, and so he simply took a humble *atelier,* seized on a rustic model, and set to work after his own fashion.

Fortune was now about to crown with almost unexampled success the hard struggle of years. It chanced that a millionaire came to Düsseldorf, saw the studies of the promising painter, and forthwith gave him a handsome commission. The subject chosen, *The Last Day of a Condemned Prisoner,* presents a tragic situation peculiar to Hungary; according to a national custom a criminal under sentence of death receives, and bids a last farewell to, relatives and friends.

With gloomy forebodings did the *Condemned Prisoner* leave for the Paris salon of 1870. The suspense happily proved short; after the private view Goupil, the picture-dealer, hastened to Düsseldorf, searched out the artist, offered for the painting thrice the amount of the commission, then ransacked portfolios for sketches, and did not leave till the promise was obtained for future work. Others proved equally urgent, and the painter's fame and fortune were forthwith assured.

Paris, it must be admitted, is treacherous ground for an unsophisticated painter whose strength has lain in implicit reliance upon nature, and it was far from a happy coincidence that at the moment when the Hungarian nomad established a fixed residence in the French capital, the Spanish painter Fortuny was the height of a screaming fashion. Munkacsy, whose middle, if not best manner, had been founded on Defregger and Knaus, fell under the feverish epidemic. With clever adroitness, he displays sleight of hand and *chic* of touch, and instead of sombre shadow, the surface glitters with tinsel light and jewelled colour.

Belonging to the latest period are two pictures, certainly not failing from lack of lofty aspiration—*Milton Dictating Paradise Lost to his Daughters* and *Christ Before Pilate.*

Munkacsy approaches themes of this elevated range not without advantages and immenities. Free from academic formula, he can express high thoughts in noble types drawn direct from nature, can show truth in her own image, and assign to the body and spirit of each time its actual form and verity.

THE RETURN FROM FISHING

(Joaquin Sorolla y Bastida)

CADWALLADER WASHBURN

THE first thing to strike one in Spanish painting is the expression of realism. Every true Spaniard working in art closely observes nature. He adopts the actual forms existing around him in actual nature. He may select one part here and another there, but he is sure to blend all into a work of realistic imagination. Thus the masterpieces of Spanish painting always profoundly impress visitors to Madrid and Seville. Spanish masters never aimed at producing mere beauty or mere dignity by simply generalising what they saw, and then clothing it in forms of their own selection. Monotony is not found in the transcripts of life by the classic Spanish painters; but among the moderns there seems to be a certain resemblance of one to another in point of realistic style. This, together with a strong evidence of nationality, rather affects the values of other and necessary qualities. Welcome exceptions to this rule are found here and there among contemporary painters. While perhaps the most strongly marked of these exceptions is Señor Joaquin Sorolla, it is true that the national stamp of Spain rests on all his pictures; and it is also true that in them we read the individual influences of three great Spanish predecessors, Velasquez, Ribera, Goya. The influence of Velasquez is

noted when we consider treatment and generalisation; Ribera's in the departments of contrast and tonality; Goya's in colour.

But first a word about the man, and next a word about his work.

Joaquin Sorolla was born in Valencia in 1863. Before he attained his third year, cholera broke out and carried away his parents among its victims. Fortunately, both he and his sister, the only remaining members of the family, were received into the home of Don José Piqueles and Doña Isabel Bastida, their uncle and aunt—thus the origin of the painter's familiar signature, Joaquin Sorolla y Bastida. Though born in Valencia, Aragonese and Catalanese blood flows in his veins: his father first saw the light in Aragon, and his mother was the daughter of Catalans.

The uncle and aunt sent Joaquin to the normal school at Valencia, hoping that he would there receive a liberal education; but he displayed no great aptitude in study. Instead, he evinced an irresistible inclination for art. He would fill his school-books with figures and sketches of whatever he saw. His protectors, finally realising the futility of keeping him longer at school, placed him in the hands of a locksmith to learn a trade. We now find young Sorolla spending his days at the forge, but passing his evening hours in drawing and painting at the School of Art of his native town. His true vocation in life was made emphatically clear, when at the close of the first year of his attendance, he carried off every prize offered by the school.

Return from Fishing — Sorolla

From that year his progress in art was rapid; and by the age of fifteen he was able to get on without further work at the forge, devoting body and soul, day and night, to drawing and painting at the Academia de las Bella Artes de San Carlos. Thence he went to Madrid, and began copying heads and figures from Velasquez and Ribera at the Museo del Prado. Now followed his studies in Rome, his travels in France and then his undertaking of important works in Italy and finally at Valencia. These created for him a recognition at the Paris Salons.

The man who smoothed Sorolla's later life journey was his warm admirer and later his father-in-law, Don Antonio Gracia. Their early acquaintance ripened into friendship and finally culminated in the settlement upon him by Don Antonio of a sufficient pension for his support until he was able entirely to depend upon his own resources. Since 1892 he has passed his time between Valencia and Madrid, painting such representative works as *The Scalding of Grapes; Sewing Sails; Bathing; A Sad Inheritance; My Family; Mother,* etc. To-day Joaquin Sorolla y Bastida is represented at the permanent galleries of Paris, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Stockholm, and Madrid, and stands on a level with the most distinguished contemporary painters.

Men of genius are sometimes better understood and their doings better appreciated when they are remote from their place of birth and boyhood. Señor Sorolla, however, forms an exception to this rule, for his character is best understood and he is most appreciated at his native town Valencia.

Naturally, his days there are his happiest, and his industry least harassed. The pride which the townspeople take in their distinguished citizen has been demonstrated in many ways, perhaps the most notable being in the renaming of a street now known as the *Calle del pintor Sorolla.* The painter lives in Madrid from November to December until the heat of the summer drives him back to Valencia.

At first glance one recognises in Señor Sorolla the typical features and characteristics of the Spaniard. He is low-built; his complexion is dark and sunburnt; his demeanour is frank, courteous and manly. A further acquaintance, however, convinces the stranger that he has met a Spaniard filled with ideas alien to the so-called orthodox Spanish standard. First of all, Señor Sorolla is opposed to monarchism; secondly, he despises the superstitiously religious rites still carefully observed in Spain; thirdly, he is opposed to the Church power in the civil government. One has not far to seek for an explanation for such independence of thought. Valencia is not very distant from the Spanish provinces sometimes known as the Carlist provinces, because there the enemies of the present Government are most numerous. On the other hand, Valencia is not very distant from Catalonia, which, of all Spanish provinces, has been the one most inclined to set up for itself as an independent concern. Thus Valencia has always been exposed to waves of opposing political dissensions and religious uprisings; and such an atmosphere influenced the maturing of the mind of a respon-

sive boy, establishing a strong and healthy individuality and independence.

Those who go to Madrid from Paris and from the north of Europe will compare the Sorolla work first with that of the late Bastien-Lepage in respect to a fondness for details; and then with that of M. Anders Zorn for vigour of treatment; and with that of M. Jean Paul Laurens for a perfect acquaintance with the construction of the human figure. The Sorolla love of colour and freedom of handling them remind one of the works of Courbet and Manet, with whom the Spaniard also compares well in point of colour-quality. But he is absolutely unlike them in choice of subject. They were content with merely vulgar episodes, providing only that these episodes offered opportunities for exercising keenness of perception. The Spaniard, on the other hand, pays as much attention to the appeal of character made by his subjects as he does to opportunities for colour-work. His preference for drawing objects with the brush instead of with crayon has been rewarded by the acquisition of a remarkable power of painting colour as it really is, and also with a facility of expressing the different planes or surfaces with a well-nourished brush, without proceeding to polishing or blending. By subsequent operations smoothness appears of itself. This mode of treatment renders loading, glazing and impaste unnecessary. Señor Sorolla is content with a simple palette of six to seven colours—zinc white, yellow oehre, Seville red earth, rose madder, ivory black, cobalt blue, and a kind of brown not unlike Cassell earth.

Even a cursory examination of the numerous studies and colour-notes which enrich the elaborate Sorolla studio in Madrid enables one to follow the development of means to an end. From these sketches it appears that, in his earlier career, the painter's favourite method was to seek strong contrasts between shadows and high lights. Though his expression of sunlight seemed always successful it was apparently unsatisfactory to the artist himself. He saw that something else in contrast was wanting, and that the tendency of his method was to lower his keynotes, thus falsifying a true impression of nature. One day, chancing to admire a study of sunlight, I remember how he came up in a state of half-despair, and, producing a match, lit it and held it against a light background. He made me observe how strongly the contrast between flame and background asserted itself, yet without affecting the value of that background, which still remained light. Then he showed me how black are the most intense light pigments in comparison with nature's. A glance through Señor Sorolla's work since that time indicates that, while contrast is still an important factor, it does not occupy his mind as much as it did in previous years. He now exercises greater discrimination in the management and treatment of his lights; while his shades and shadows are still dark, they are not blackish, and they do not lack atmosphere. Consequently the keynotes are higher.

Señor Sorolla's pictures exhibit one supreme quality. This, on account of its insistent distinctness, prevents other qualities from asserting themselves too separately; and the presence of

the supreme quality completes the unity of impression which readers derive from each of the painter's works. Only with a very critical eye, then, may one discover the influences of Spain itself, and of those parts of Spain represented by Velasquez, Ribera and Goya.

This supreme quality is the artist's spontaneous and masterful feeling for sunlight. In one of his pictures it is seen in an expression of the intensely penetrating and intolerable heat proceeding from an African sun. On another canvas this feeling is shown in the soft warmth and happy laziness characterising life on the Mediterranean coast. In still another painting we feel at once the brilliancy of southern sunlight, together with a chilliness and a strong atmospheric irritability from the mistral wind. Such successful renderings of different aspects of sunlight, without resorting to artifices or tricks, form the main secret of Señor Sorolla's work and greatness.

THE END

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